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CONTENTS

Articles

- 1 ... The Japanese and Religion A Panel Discussion
24 ... The Church of World Messianity... .. Masakazu Fujieda
35 ... Religion and Modern Life II (cont'd) ... Yoshiro Tamura
57 ... Japan's New Religions (concluded) ... H. Neill McFarland

Reviews

- 70 ... Religious Studies in Japan Richard Bush
74 ... Eishō Kawasaki, Sakiji Kawashiguma, Chiko
Sanada (editors) *Toshi Ji'in no Shakai-teki*
Kinō (Social Function of the Buddhist
Temple) Yoshirō Tamura

Religious World in Japan

- 76 ... Japanese Buddhism and World Buddhism ... Senchu Murano
82 ... Chronology for 1960 (July—September)

Institute News

92 ... By the way

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THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

A Panel Discussion



CHAIRMAN: *Tsunamasa Furuya*

PARTICIPANTS: *Saburō Ienaga, Kazō Kitamori, Iichi Oguchi*

Chairman (C) In the four lectures which we have heard religion has been discussed from various points of view. Today, we want your frank opinion about the religious nature of the Japanese people. We think that the Japanese point of view regarding religion is quite different from that of Westerners. While the people in Western countries were born into and fostered by a Christian environment, the Japanese have had to choose their own religious faith out of many kinds of religions. It is true, of course, that Japan has many religions; but this very fact may be the cause of much religious indifference. In selecting one of the religious beliefs in Japan, one must go through the agony of making a decision.

When I went abroad, one of the most interesting things to me was that in entering some countries I had to state my religious affiliation. I usually wrote "no religion" in the column, and this was acceptable in most cases. However, sometimes it wasn't. In such cases, to avoid unnecessary discussion, I put

down "Buddhist." I joined the camp of the Buddhists, who are a majority in Japan. This status of having no religion seems to be a most difficult thing for foreigners to understand. Mr. Oguchi, will you please comment on this point?

Oguchi (O) This matter of selecting a religion is important. I think religion is something that we must choose, and in this connection we might think about Catholicism and Buddhism. In both these forms of religion people belong to some church or temple whether they believe in it or not. Thus, religion is nothing but a social institution. Mr. Ienaga may have a better knowledge of what I am talking about.

Such an aspect of Buddhism in Japan originates in the system of temple supporters (*danka*^a), which was established and developed during the Edo period by the Tokugawa shogunate. Besides, as a result of the anti-Buddhist movement of the Meiji Restoration, the religious world became very confused. However, new religious movements, that is, Sectarian Shinto and Protestantism arose and at present new religions are prosperous in Japan. Foreigners think that "new religions" are something quite new, something apart from the established religions. But this isn't the case. Most of these "new" religious bodies can be classified into one of the three established religions, Shinto, Buddhism, and Christianity, the traditional faiths in the Tokugawa period.

C Mr. Ienaga, please.

Ienaga (I) I am not a specialist in the field of religion, but I

a. 檀家

THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

would like to clarify the definition of religion first. I say this because, when people say that the Japanese are not very religious, they do so from a Christian point of view, in which case the criticism is quite correct. But I think the Japanese scene needs a more careful examination. We may find the Japanese religious scene quite different from the Christian West. However, if we look back into the stone age we may be unable to find any difference at all. The situation did not basically change in the succeeding ancient societies and the feudal ages.

We can see the difference in the forms of religion and the character of piety, but not in the degree of piety. People are religious, Westerners and Japanese alike. Though we may say that the Japanese attitude toward religion from ancient times has promoted religious indifference among today's Japanese, I am quite opposed to the contention that the Japanese are religiously indifferent compared to other nations in the world.

C Mr. Kitamori may have something to say from the Christian point of view.

Kitamori (K) I like to take a different approach to the problem.

I would like to tell you a story, the story of a typical white-collar worker in downtown Tokyo. He is fifty years old. He was baptized almost twenty years ago. Then he stopped going to church. He was one of the so-called "graduate believers." Yet he came back to the church several years ago and is quite active now. He even does some evangelistic work among his colleagues. He is devoted but the annoyed pagans gracefully interrupt his preaching with an expression which is a blow to

his good intention. They say, "No more talk about gloomy things, please."

The death of man and sin are gloomy topics to talk about at lunch. However, this isn't the end of the story. There is more to be said. Those who are quite reluctant to hear about unlucky things, think about them seriously when they are alone, or are awake at night. I think it is quite difficult to judge whether a man is religious or not. There is no standard criterion. It may be impossible to describe Japanese religiosity in a word. Japanese intellectuals are quite bashful in talking about religion. They are not used to talking intellectually about it. They feel some antagonism to religion. They are reluctant to talk about it and to attend church. But they read books on religion at home.

C Yes, that is true. They are quite reluctant to commit themselves or to join some religious group. People are sympathetic to religion, but they are not ardent enough to identify themselves with one of the religious bodies. They think such an action is something incompatible with the intellectual mind. I wonder what really is behind such a way of thinking?

K I think this way of thinking is caused by the Japanese sentiment which prefers the smart (*iki*^a) to the unrefined (*yabo*^b). These words are difficult to translate into a foreign language, aren't they? Parents are quite pleased to see their children go to church rather than to some clubs; yet they dislike to see their children be very eager and active at the churches. Parents usually advise their children not to be too involved in church activities. They wish the children to have loose ties with such

a. 粹 b. 野暮

things. They respect religion all right, but they don't love it. Church-going is better than drinking.

C The Japanese are described as being obedient to authorities. If they had not been so obedient, they would have been caught by some religion. But the Japanese are, as you know, not absorbed in any one type of religion. How could this happen? Mr. Ienaga, would you explain this situation and clarify it for us?

I Yes, I will. The Japanese are certainly obedient, as you say; but they are obedient to the traditional religion the authority of which was established in ancient times. As Mr. Oguchi has suggested, the Tokugawa government forced the people to register in one of the temples, and the people followed this instruction without any resistance. I would like to call your attention to Japanese folk religion which is usually called Shinto. I myself do not use this term at all. This folk religion is an agricultural cult widely practiced in ancient societies all over the world. This is not a faith to select, but a culture or custom in which one is born and brought up. The people's daily life, as well as their festivals, are deeply religious. For instance, the intellectuals, who claim to be through with religion, observe the age-old customs of the New Year cult, such as the use of rice-cakes (*mochi*^a) and sacred straw festoons (*shimenawa*^b). Of course, people forget the significance of these observances, but they cannot cast them away. So the Japanese are quite obedient to this type of religious life which is observed by the whole community. Yet they are quite reluctant to have a personal faith. They prefer to have ties as loose as possible with things which are not sanctioned by the whole community.

a. 餅 b. 注連縄

THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

C That's right. Christians observe wedding ceremonies and funeral services according to their own cult, but the common Japanese people observe wedding ceremonies according to the Shinto cult and hold funeral services in a Buddhist manner. Going to the shrine is observed by parents who take their new-born baby to the Shinto priest for a blessing. Such a custom is not the expression of their faith, but a mere borrowing of rites. At present even the system of temple supporters is declining, but I think parishes and parishioners remain just as they do in Western countries. Why is this?

O I think that they still exist as a system.

C Well, yes, in a sense. When some one dies, we remember the sect that our family supports. At least we ask the religious affiliation of the family.

O In carrying out a religious survey, we found that students do not know what a temple supporter is. Some may know some temple, but they do not care much about the sect to which the temple belongs. They are quite ignorant of the various sects.

I How do you explain this kind of ignorance?

O I think this has been caused by urbanization. Communities in rural areas keep the temple supporter system and observe their shrine festivals on the basis of the parishioner (*ujiko*^a) relationship. Rural people are held together by temples or shrines in their districts, and there is no room for newcomers to step in. This is a problem waiting for our careful study. In this campaign Tenri-kyo has won, while the "new religions" and Christianity have failed. After World War II the "new

a. 氏子

THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

religions " blossomed with many followers in urban areas, but most of the Japanese population consists of farmers. The religion which becomes popular among the farmers will win in this pious Olympic.

K Mr. Ienaga, you spoke about the decline of the temple supporter system. I would like to suggest that, rather than being the effect of other religions, such as Christianity, this was caused by the dissolution of the tight community consciousness and the emergence of pragmatic individualism. People in rural areas, where this has not occurred, are still tied up in the family religion. Christians are not exceptions. For instance, a Christian farmer's daughter may stop attending church because of her marriage with a non-Christian husband. I do not insist that the interfaith marriage is the only reason for their stopping. The main reason seems to be that such communities are too conservative to accept individualism. On the other hand, family ties are easily cast away in urban communities, which make it easy for the individual to have his own personal faith.

C You are referring to Christianity?

K Yes.

C Speaking of Christianity, what do you think is the main reason for the slowing down of its expansion? Christianity was re-introduced into this country just one hundred years ago. Yet, while it has made remarkable progress in other parts of the world, it has only 500,000 or 600,000 believers* today. However, I don't deny its contribution to the intellectual

* 1959 statistics indicate a total church membership, Catholic and Protestant, of 678,258. Ed.

scene in Japan.

K We must take an historical approach to this problem. Christianity started its expansion under the Roman aegis after the fourth century. It was given the kind of protection that Japan gave to Buddhism. Converts were made by mass production. Christianity was introduced to the Germans, who had no tradition or philosophy strong enough to resist it. The missionary enterprise was easy to carry on and swift to expand.

The Christian movement in Japan faced a different situation. First, in the nineteenth century it was introduced into Japan where it met a hostile sister faith, Buddhism. Second, its evangelistic work suffered a great deal under the emperor system. Finally, it was in such a hurry that it forgot to change its costume and adjust itself to meet the new environment. This third point is without doubt a fault, yet, it had no other choice. The Japanese empire was too hard for it to cope with.

I I quite agree with you, Mr. Kitamori. When Catholicism was introduced into Japan in the sixteenth century, it made remarkable progress and yet it was eliminated. This elimination does not mean that it was a fake or that the believers were hesitant in their evangelism. Rather, it was persecuted by means of nation-wide political pressure aided by military force.

In the Meiji era Protestantism was introduced, and this time the peculiar idea of Japanese national polity (*kokutai*^a) was the biggest obstacle for its advancement, wasn't it? As we have remarked earlier, there are old and primitive religious

a. 国体

THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

cults and community rituals in rural Japan which are an obstacle to the entry of new religions. Yet, if Christianity had been introduced into Japan in the sixth century when Buddhism came in, it might have spread as Buddhism did. This seems quite possible when we look into the history of Catholic expansion in the sixteenth century.

The strength of the primitive religious cult in rural Japan is not the only reason for the Christian failure. Japanese nationalism was strong and it consciously rejected Christianity. The last time, we discussed the difference between Westernization,* didn't we? Christianity is a ring in the chain of modern culture made in Europe. The policy of the Japanese government was the adoption of military and industrial techniques, which were essential for the wealth of the nation, and the rejection of European ideas of politics and morals which endangered national unity. Thus, Christianity was eliminated from the list because it was a foreign element which, it was believed, would cause trouble in connection with the new ideas of national polity then forming about the Emperor. This governmental screening should be regarded as the greatest obstacle to the advance of Christianity.

C How about Buddhism? What were its difficulties with the indigenous folk religion?

I I don't think that there were any. Both religions were the same in nature, offering magical prayers for bumper crops, the prosperity of the country, and the avoidance of natural disasters and evils. As Mr. Kitamori pointed out the Buddhism, which was introduced in the sixth century and became the state

* See *Contemporary Religions in Japan* Vol. I No. 3 (September, 1960) p. 1.

religion, was quite different from the fundamental Buddhism established by Gautama for the enlightenment of individuals. Consequently, state Buddhism was almost the same as the indigenous folk religion in its function and was believed in as such. These two religions could cooperate for a common purpose without inviting any trouble.

I do not deny the recorded conflict in the *Nihon Shoki*^a, that is, the conflict between the Soga^b and Mononobe^c clans as to whether or not Buddhism should be accepted. But this conflict was nothing but a struggle for political leadership and far from religion *per se*. If this had been a religious issue, this kind of conflict would have been repeated again and again in the following pages of Japanese history. I don't think that this was a religious conflict, because this is the only conflict we hear anything about.

C Now I understand the situation which caused the emergence of syncretism. Christianity must have been quite foreign to Japanese soil. Mr. Oguchi?

O Mr. Kitamori may have a better answer to the problem. I would like to make this problem more specific especially in reference to the idea of God. When the Bible was translated into Japanese, the word "God" was translated as *Kami*. *Kami*, as you know, is a Shinto word, and this translation caused a confusion between the Christian idea of God and the Japanese conception of diety. So it is rather difficult for a Japanese to understand the Christian idea of God and its doctrine. I think that people engaged in evangelistic work must have a hard time trying to straighten out this confusion.

a. 日本書紀 b. 蘇我 c. 物部

K This problem of translation has been brought up frequently for discussion, and I think that the discussions usually miss the point. For a scholarly discussion we have to go back to the original text. The original Greek text uses the word *theos* to convey the Christian idea of God. And this *theos* is, as you know, an Olympian god who fights and becomes jealous. The English *God*, the German *Gott*, and the Latin *Deus* are dieties in their respective lands. Strictly speaking, they are quite different from the Christian idea of God. Yet Christianity has used these terms. So we have to raise questions about *theos*, *Deus*, and *God* if we are to question our usage of the Japanese word *Kami*.

O However, speaking of the word *kami*, it strongly reminds the Japanese people of the ancient indigenous dieties.

K This problem should be examined from a different angle than the religious. The political issue must be considered. The *kami* issue reminds us of Caesar worship in the Roman empire. From the fall of the Roman empire until it came to Japan, where the Emperor was *the* God, Christianity was never confronted with a political issue. Christianity has had bitter experiences in connection with this problem in both the Roman and Japanese empires. If a duel must be fought between God and *kami*, we can rationally settle the issue. But the political issue needs another kind of solution.

O That's right. In Japan religions or their organizations became powerful when they were united with politics. It is remarkable that religions developed through making use of governments, while the latter made use of the former. The Japanese believe that man becomes a *kami* and, according

THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

to this kind of faith, the Emperor is a living *kami* (*Arahito-gami*^a). Having carefully examined the different forms of polytheism, I wonder if the notion that man can be a *kami* should be classified as polytheism.

Is it right to call this polytheism such as was seen in Rome and Greece?

Everything was the object of adoration: nature, things, and men. We can recognize this kind of belief among the Romans and Greeks. I wonder if political leaders or military forces are the only reasons for the expulsion of those animistic beliefs?

K I should say that those beliefs did not have such a strong religious character as Christianity. They are not as universal as Christianity.

O I still think that there should be a religion suitable to a race settled in a farming area.

I Speaking of Christianity and her expansion in Japan, if the emperor system was the biggest obstacle, I would like to know the reason why Christianity has not made more noticeable progress since 1945, when the opposition between the emperor system and Christianity was dissolved.

K I think that in some classes the emperor system and the feudal system have been broken up, but in other classes they still exist unaffected. Mr. Oguchi may be able to give us a clear picture of what they are like in rural areas. I have an impression that there are a great many people who give adoration or homage to the Emperor. He was democratized all right. Yet this was done in a nominal sense and the

a. 現人神

THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

substance remained as it was. It is impossible that the age-old feudal system was overthrown in a day on August 15th.

On the one hand, the defeat of Japan might have invited the rise of individualism, but this has taken the shape of egotism and caused chaos in various avenues of life. The new generation has no brains to think things through. They have become nihilistic and indifferent to religion, and their number is increasing. On the other hand, the people in rural areas still regard Christianity as a foreign religion and wicked in nature.

C We do not believe that Christianity is *the* religion. However, be that as it may, according to Mr. Kitamori, although State Shinto was abolished, it is still living in rural areas and in the mind of the pseudo-intelligentsia. As for Buddhism being attached to Shinto, this is also true. In urban areas Christianity has made progress, but realism or indifference to religion hinders its growth. I think it can be said that the Japanese people have no idea of ethics based on religion though they have a concept of religion. No one can deny the fact that Christianity is the backbone of ethics in Western countries, and that other religions, such as Islam, have a set of ethical disciplines, while Shinto and Buddhism in Japan cannot make any such claim. The failure of Japanese, I think, is described in the statement that the Japanese have no religiosity. Those who criticize Japanese religiosity criticize it from such an ethical point of view. What shall be our answer to such criticism?

O The relation of religion and ethics was analyzed by Dr. Oshima.* I wonder if there is any religion which is not

* See *Contemporary Religions in Japan* Vol. I No. 1 (March, 1960) p. 25

ethical. This reminds me of the so-called peace movement. When the need of a peace movement by religious groups is stressed, some religionists reply that religious groups and institutions need no special peace movement because religion is peaceful in nature. This is a misleading reply, as you know. If we just look at a page or two of any history book, we find bloody struggles among pious people on page after page. We can't say this kind of religion is ethical, can we?

C No, not at all. But what I mean is discipline rather than ethics.

O Speaking of discipline, I know some Islam believers living in Japan who, contrary to their moral code, drink wine and eat pork. They might be following the Japanese pattern, and may act like the Romans when they are in Rome. But, as this case clearly shows, religious discipline has been broken because people cannot keep the pace of modern civilization if they keep such observances strictly. For instance, usury may be a suitable illustration. Both Catholicism and Islam prohibit usury, but people cannot live in this age of capitalism if they stick to the old rules. Consequently, such a rule must be eliminated in practice, and thus the disciplines are loosened in general, I think.

I I think that religion and ethics were one and the same thing in ancient Japan, when what we call folk religion was the basis of society and regulated all community activities. So also in Japanese mythology, such as the *Kojiki*^a and *Nihon Shoki*, sin was not only moral and legal sin, but was also religious sin, deserving both punishment and atonement.

a. 古事記

THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

The ritual of purification has both functions. The expulsion of Susano-o-no-mikoto^a from heaven was both punishment and ritual. Thus, religion and ethics were one and the same thing in ancient Japanese society. The reason why they seem to be separated can be found in the fact that the common people are apt to follow the group patterns and customs rather than their private moral judgement. This is related to the phenomenon that people have difficulties in coming out of an old faith and in selecting their own. Intellectuals or the ruling class follow the same pattern of behaviour because of the ways of thinking formed during the Edo period. The controlling samurai class made the people associate with the temples. They adopted this policy in order to control the commoners.

The samurai had contempt for Buddhism, but held in high esteem Confucianism, which was the basis of their ethics, namely, Bushidō^b. Bushidō consisted mainly of secular ethics which is not based on religion. It was revived in the emperor system of the Meiji era coated with modern nationalism. The Meiji government highly esteemed this type of rationalism, and fostered indifference to religion on the part of the intellectuals, who were the successors of the samurai in Western clothing. Contempt for religion was heightened by the recent revival of communistic atheism. Religion and ethics were separated. Emperor worship is a religion without heaven and hell.

K I had the privilege of making a hasty trip to Europe in 1956, and stayed most of the time in Germany. In Munich

a. 素戔鳴尊 *b.* 武士道

THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

I happened to meet a white-collar worker about thirty years of age, who did not know that I was a Christian. During our conversation religion became the topic of discussion. He told me that 80% of the German people were nominal Christians, but that actually most of them, including himself, were atheists.

Japan has only 300,000 or 400,000 believers.* This may be a small figure compared with Christian nations. Yet a comparison with Christian nations will have no sense at all, if the figures include a great number of atheists. We cannot depend much on statistics. I think religion is pure and clean when it is too small in numbers to associate with politics. Religion will be salt without taste, if it associates with political power, not to speak of engagement in secular war as pointed out by Mr. Oguchi. Religion faces the hardest trial in keeping itself clean when it becomes popular with the general public. Being a social institution, religion is generally speaking idealistic and clean, when it is separated from power. We believe Christianity is safe and sound when it is persecuted, as it was after the days of her founder, Jesus Christ.

C I see your point. Christians in Western countries, then, are something like Buddhists and Shintoists in our country.

K I would like to comment again on the relation between religion and ethics. When some Christian countries engage in war and use the atomic bomb, evangelism in Japan has a hard time, because the people in general identify Christianity with those Christians. Consequently, Christianity loses her

* Dr. Kitamori is apparently referring only to Protestants who total 376, 357. (see also the note on p. 7) Ed.

popularity as soon as some such Christian nations become unpopular. In power politics, national interest has priority over Christian piety. Politics is different in nature from ethics. Christians are Christians, as long as they live as individuals, but Christians think and act differently as a nation. This is the big problem.

- ④ Then we must be content with the separation of "church" and state.

Now, I would like to change our topic to a discussion of the "new religions." My impression is that the "new religions" are growing rapidly in number and have gained a great many converts, several times the number of Christian believers. What do you think of this phenomenon, Mr. Oguchi?

- ④ Well, one criterion of religious institutions is the number of believers, as well as the grand appearance of the headquarters buildings. When I question the necessity of such buildings, the leaders tell me that the believers wish or insist that the institution should have a large building. They expect worldly benefit, and test the value of a religion by its rewards. This expectation requires magical practices, and the common people expect this kind of a response from Christianity, as well as from Shinto and Buddhism.

Since 1945 the Catholics have been quite aggressive in their work. A certain village was reported to have been entirely converted to the Catholic faith. But, according to recent information, the whole village backslid to the old faiths. The villagers were attracted by the worldly benefits offered by the Catholic Church. The Church distributed relief goods and promised new buildings for a school and hospital.

THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

When they found that these promises were not realized, they left the church and returned to their old faiths. They were disappointed because they looked for earthly treasures and paid no attention to piety.*

Protestants have had a similar experience. The Lacour team, for instance, did marvelous work with audio-visual campaigning in rural areas that Japanese ministers never had visited before. Yet such a campaign sometimes proves fruitless after the team returns home. People may throng to the churches because of curiosity, and stop coming to church when the Americans leave. There seems to be no religious aspiration among the common people.

K Speaking of the "new religions," we are informed that some group has gained a suprising number of believers and is sending its representatives to the Upper House. This is a new phenomenon in Japan, I believe.

O You are referring to the Sōka Gakkai^a, I believe. They are sending their representatives to local prefectural assemblies as well as the national Diet. At the last election all the candidates to the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly were elected. The local leaders are very eager to help their communities and are responding to the daily needs of their fellow-believers. But their position in the Japanese political scene is quite ambiguous.

* Dr. Oguchi in this paragraph and the next appears to have based his comments very largely on newspaper reports. While it is true that in the village referred to there has been a change, the entire village was never converted and there is today a fine church in the village. Those responsible for the Lacour program regard it as highly successful. In five years some thirty churches were established. Ed.

a. 創価学会

THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

C The public was surprised to learn that Sōka Gakkai increased its number of believers in such a short period of time. This increase seems to have been the result of strong leadership. I wonder if this kind of increase is a typical Japanese pattern?

O No, it isn't. We must pay attention to the fact that the rank and file of members are well trained and organized, as in the case of the so-called circle movement among trade unionists. It is quite difficult to leave the organization once you have joined. This difficulty is found in many religious bodies and requires careful study. They do not have a rule prohibiting members to leave, but group morale is so strong, and the group is too cohesive for a member to leave.

The sense of unity shared by each member is wonderful. Human relations in religious organizations have been vertical, as far as the relation between charismatic leaders and the followers is concerned, but human relations in these "new religions" are not only vertical between leaders and followers. They are also horizontal among the followers. This is one of the important characteristic to be found in the activities of the "new religions."

C A new type?

O I don't think that this is a new phenomenon. In the Tokugawa period, for instance, people gathered in the temple and had an opportunity to talk to each other. Such gatherings were called "*kōa*" (associations). I think this phenomenon has changed into what we see among the "new religions."

C I think such religious organizations might become very

powerful in politics.

- I The Honganji^a sectarian organization may be like this. Its basic power is located in the associations to which Mr. Oguchi has referred. Other old religious bodies have relied for their support entirely on the land given by their patron feudal lords, and they have neglected the human element and group dynamics. The Honganji has strong ties with each of the members who are bound closely together in the associations. The Honganji's amazing propaganda was carried on through the human relations in this association system.

There are two reasons, I think, for the rise of the "new religions." The first is that the state control of religious institutions was considerably weakened by Japan's defeat in 1945. The second may be the contradiction caused by the suffering in daily living after 1945. The people began to think for themselves, and they went to the "new religions," because they could not find a rational solution of the new contradictions and the established religions could not provide an answer to them.

- O Certainly the Religious Organizations Law (*Shūkyō Dantai Hō*^b) was as bad as the Public Safety Law. The abolition of this Law was the starting point of these "new religions," because they are now free to carry on any activities. Some people started "new religions" to make profit. One of the main characteristics of the "new religions" may be the power and activities of their young people. This phenomenon is nothing but the result of their concentrated efforts on youth work. The reason why the young people were attracted to the "new re-

a. 本願寺 b. 宗教団体法

THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

ligions " may need careful study.

- C Is there anything so attractive to youth? There must be something lively and active in the "new religions" while, as Mr. Kitamori pointed out, the established religions are so gloomy.
- O The young people are looking for something to which they can dedicate themselves and the "new religions" have much appeal to their energies. The leaders of these "new religions" officially speak as if they expect a great deal from the youth; and they are generous in giving leadership to the young people. The social status of these people is very low; but as group leaders they feel their ego is raised and they are quite happy.
- C Young people come to trade unions or "new religions" for the outlet of their energies. Is that so?
- O The candidates for national election have this clearly in their minds.
- C I think that this kind of enthusiasm among young people has something in common with the Marxist and socialist movement in the late twenties before the Manchurian incident. Mr. Ienaga, you may have something to say on this subject.
- I I don't know much about this. My feeling is that the pursuit of individual happiness may be their most important objective. Young adolescents are quite sensitive about individual needs. During World War II people had to sacrifice themselves for the public and the country, and individualism was severely criticized. This is the age of individualism as well as selfishness. I don't speak from a knowledge of facts or from experience, but religion seems to be the place to respond to the needs of this individualism.
- C Thank you, Mr. Ienaga. And now, gentlemen, I would like

THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

to hear your opinion about religion and politics. There are political parties based on Christian principles. Christian nations, such as Italy and Germany, have this kind of political parties ; but in Japan we do not have any. Though we have some representatives of religious groups, they are quite small in number. I wonder if it is possible for Japan to have such a party, Mr. Kitamori?

K I do not know much about politics. Some Christian statesman told me that the Japanese should not have a multi-party system. The moment Japanese Christians organize their own party, it will cause the emergence of a powerful Buddhist party. So this Christian gentleman thinks it wise, for the sake of the future of Christianity, not to organize such a party. This is what a prominent Christian statesman told me.

C So a religious party is questionable.

O Frankly speaking, I can see no possibility of such a religious party.

C You mean that religion and politics are different things.

O Some religious bodies are eager to organize their own parties, but it seems to be impossible to do such a thing. There is an association, which consists of such organizations, but its influence is not very strong and it faces rather strong opposition.

C We have roughly covered the main problems among Japanese religions. Finally, I would like to have your comments on religions in Japan.

O I would like to speak about the nature of religion. We have discussed this before, and I still believe that religion is something to be chosen. Religious beliefs should not be forced. This is a problem of the conscience. If some one is asked to

THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

join some organization and is quite reluctant to do so, he had better refuse to do so. This refusal is easy for urban people, but it is difficult for rural people. So we must build up a new society in which people fear nothing, and can resist compulsion.

C How about it, Mr. Ienaga?

I I quite agree with Mr. Oguchi's statement; but I would like to add one word to what Mr. Kitamori said about the failure of religion when it holds power. A political party may have no way of judging itself about this matter of power politics. But religion has and should have a criterion to review itself in this matter. Religion must have a mirror to reflect its own haughtiness. Religion is not a machine to make profit, but a criticism of the actual world. In this point can be found the value of religion.

C Mr. Kitamori, please.

K Religion claims to be something different from the world. Yet, true religion must have her roots deep in the earth, and must share common responsibilities with the world. We Christians recognize this common responsibility. I hope all religions, including Christianity, will keep a well-balanced relationship with the world.

C We have talked on religions in Japan and find that the Japanese idea of religion is not the same as that of other countries. We like to think of the religions in the different frames of reference offered by each participant in this fruitful discussion. Thank you.

Note: The above manuscript is a translation of a broadcast transcribed from tapes loaned by the Japan Broadcasting Corporation. Editor.

THE CHURCH OF WORLD MESSIANITY

(Sekai Kyūsei-kyō)



Masakazu Fujieda

The Founder

The Church of World Messianity* worships the God of Creation, the Almighty God who rules the paradise of our earth. The slogan of the Church of World Messianity is the construction of a paradise on earth filled with “Truth, Virtue, and Beauty.” The founder and the first spiritual leader of the Church was the late Mr. Mokichi Okada^a, who is still giving guidance to this movement from heaven. The second spiritual leader is his widow, Mrs. Yoshiko Okada^b.

Mr. Okada was born in 1882 in Tokyo into a family of merchants. During his boyhood he was physically weak, but in the later years his health improved. He wanted to become a painter, so he enrolled in an art school. However, owing to an eye illness he had to leave school, and after some time he entered his father's business. Still he had to contend with many kinds of illness and at times he was at the brink of death. For instance, at one time he suffered from tuberculosis. His case was declared hopeless by physicians. At another time he suffered from pleurisy. Once, he even wrote his will, but he did not die. He married and had two children, but both they and his wife died. His many kinds of illness and his life

* Sekai Kyūsei-kyō 世界救世教 a. 岡田茂吉 b. 岡田良子

THE CHURCH OF WORLD MESSIANITY

of poverty constitute the background of his religious experience.

Despite these unfavorable circumstances, Mr. Okada had a very strong sense of justice. He wanted to see justice prevail in society. He wanted to create social conditions so that peace and justice would prevail. Therefore, in spite of his poverty he gave money to the Salvation Army and other social welfare organizations. He wanted to do something gigantic by way of social education in order to create some social welfare foundation. Furthermore, he wanted to build schools and establish an influential newspaper. And since such things required money, he became very busy making money in his father's business; but all his fortune was lost in the great Kantō earthquake of 1923. This was a great blow. Everything was lost. About this time he entered Ōmoto^a, a popular religious movement.

Establishment of the Church of World Messianity

Through divine revelation Mr. Okada was able to chart the historical stages of mankind. The world and the universe should be looked upon through divine revelation. Encouraged by his revelation, he decided to establish a new organization, which he launched in 1935. At that time his headquarters was in Tokyo and his followers numbered approximately four or five hundred. The official date of establishment was January 1, 1935, so it was 25 years old January 1, 1960.

After that everything went smoothly, although during World War II he suffered from oppression. For instance, because his movement was not officially recognized as a religious organiza-

a. 大本

THE CHURCH OF WORLD MESSIANITY

tion, it had to be registered as an organization for healing illness. At the end of the war, however, it was incorporated as a religious organization and after that it made a very speedy recovery because the believers could concentrate on purely religious activity. At present there are about 400,000 believers. The headquarters of the organization is in two places, Hakone^a and Atami^b. Furthermore, the Church has extended its activities to foreign countries.

Before the organization became as large as it is now, that is, not only during the war but afterwards, Mr. Okada suffered many times from police interference. He was called in frequently for questioning, but such oppression and difficulties only resulted in further expansion.

Doctrine

It is not through logic but through emotion and the evidence of doctors that the teachers of the Church of World Messianity try to inculcate its doctrine among the believers. The object of worship is "*Sōzō Sushin*" that is, the God of Creation who wills that paradise be built on this earth so that mankind can follow the will of God.

The method that God provides is the elimination of the three evils: sickness, poverty, and strife; but paradise can not be brought about by material civilization alone. A religious civilization must be developed before paradise can be attained. So the present task of the leaders of the Church of World Messianity is the creation of such a religious civilization and its propagation among all the people.

a. 箱根 b. 熱海 c. 創造主神

THE CHURCH OF WORLD MESSIANITY

The Universe Now one may ask how the leaders of the Church of World Messianity look upon the universe and the world of reality. The basis of their belief is that paradise should be built here. The leaders believe it is the will of God that this be done and consider that everything that has happened since the establishment of the Church and is happening in this world is proof that there is a course for the realization of this divine will. The leaders regard the past as "night." The present time is a moment of transition. Since man was created on this earth, millions of years have elapsed and now we are going to welcome the dawn of paradise on this earth.

Up to now only material civilization has been dominant. Should religious civilization be added to this, then a genuine paradise will come into existence. This is what we are striving for.

Man As for human beings, man is regarded as the "lord of creation," but his soul and mind must be purified and become better. Everything depends on the quality of the soul and mind. Man, being inherently a child of God, possesses in part the divine spirit, which is generally known as conscience. At the same time, man has a side which is bestial, egotistic and shameful. So man is considered to have a dual nature: one side good, the other bestial. One and the same person can be good at one moment and very bad at another moment. Even the most evil human being has in himself the divine nature, so there is always a possibility of salvation, and of doing what is right. Superior effort can always be exerted.

THE CHURCH OF WORLD MESSIANITY

Happiness As for happiness and unhappiness. If man follows the path shown by God, he is bound to become happy. When he deviates from the divine law given by God, then naturally he becomes unhappy. This unhappiness can manifest itself in various ways but it is always to be regarded as a reprimand from God. In the Church of World Messianity the leaders speak of “spirit first, body second” (*reishu taijū*^a), that is, the spirit must always be the master and the body must always be subservient to the spirit. All the teachers of World Messianity are trying to do their best to educate the thousands of their believers in this direction: spirit dominant; body subservient.

There are clouds in our souls which exist in the same manner as our physical bodies. When the physical body dies, the spirit goes to the other world. All sickness or so-called unhappiness is derived from the clouding of this spiritual body. When the clouds of the spirit are removed, then the spirit becomes healthy and the body naturally follows the spirit. The body becomes healthy when the spirit is purified. It ought to become as clear as crystal. One possessing a crystal clear spirit should be able to always enjoy health. Such a being can be called a “heavenly being” or a being of the spirit.

How to Gain Happiness Next comes the problem of how to get rid of the clouds or shadows of the spirit. There are two ways to do this. One way is by channeling the divine light, which is given from above to purify the soul. Another way is through human effort, through doing good or virtuous things for other people or for the sake of society. The teachers of

a. 靈主体従

THE CHURCH OF WORLD MESSIANITY

the Church of World Messianity are rendering good service in conveying this light from God to believers. Countless cases of illness have been healed. Countless cases of unhappiness have been overcome.

Gaining Converts The most single powerful factor in making the Church of World Messianity expand is joy—the purification of the spirit, which brings about a kind of miracle in the lives of the believers. This is the very thing that was revealed by God to Mr. Okada. This is the key point in propagating the doctrine and in attracting converts.

It is not only the teachers that receive this divine light from God. Every follower and every believer also receives this divine light. The teacher is blest, and every earnest believer or even a novice, can channel this light or transmit it to other people. The deeper his spiritual concord with God becomes, the higher becomes his future status and the more abundant are the blessings of God.

Religion and Science In regard to modern science, we believe that science came from God. The trouble is that science has not developed as it should. Mr. Okada said that in the end science will be mirrored to a certain extent, that science itself will come to recognize God, that is, admit the existence of God. The ultimate goal of God is to follow to the end the course of development willed by God. It is because scientists are not developed to such an ultimate stage that they tend to deny God; and because of this denial of God the world is taking a very undesirable course and the ethics of material

civilization are fostered.

We must try to set science in the right direction and make scientific people recognize the existence of God. But to achieve this end by logical methods is impossible and useless. The approach must be through both the emotions and concrete evidence. In this connection there is a great need for spiritual interchange between God and man.

The method of bringing this spiritual interchange was explained a while ago. It is possible to convert an atheist who is sick. Depending upon the degree of sickness, the number of treatments differs. When it is light, then one treatment will be sufficient; but when it is very severe, more will be needed. In any case an atheist, that is, one who does not believe in God, can be healed. Then the atheist will agree that there is something invisible, something very powerful; so he comes much nearer to God. It is through such a method that we bring people nearer to God.

In this connection Mr. Okada said that all the miracles wrought by Jesus Christ and mentioned in the Bible can be believed without any spiritual resistance. We believe all these miracles mentioned in the Bible 100%, because from day to day we observe such miracles among our followers.

Purification How is this purification of the spirit brought about? Mr. Okada seems to have laid special emphasis on the importance of beauty. That is why he established an art museum in Hakone. The purification of the spirit, Mr. Okada said, can always be brought about either through the beauty of nature or through artificial beauty. This is preached today among all

THE CHURCH OF WORLD MESSIANITY

the believers not only at the art museum in Hakone, but at large tracts of land, which have been transformed into beautiful gardens, where the followers are encouraged to cleanse and purify their souls amid beautiful surroundings. These gardens and art museums constitute a model of the paradise on earth, which is sought after by the Church of World Messianity.

When such beautiful surroundings come into existence in the rest of the world, then the real paradise may be observed.

Food Another point is that care must be taken in regard to one's food, the material food one eats every day. The founder taught that the usual foodstuffs eaten by people nowadays are not pure. Sometimes they are artificially colored. People depend too much on fertilizer or manure. Such things spoil the purity of food. When such contaminated food goes into the body, to that extent the body and soul become contaminated. To achieve purity in food the Church of World Messianity preaches a natural cultivation method just by utilizing every bit of the natural soil given by God, without the use of any manure or fertilizer. Every particle of the soil must be made to produce the best and purest crop it can grow.

Other Religions In regard to other religions World Messianity is very tolerant. It believes that all religions come from one God. There may be very primitive religions, but every religion has come to this earth to meet the need of a certain age or a certain group of people. There may be a natural selection among religions. Those which have to go will disappear in the course of time; but those that are necessary will remain to

THE CHURCH OF WORLD MESSIANITY

meet the needs of the time. Religions ought to cooperate for the achievement of world peace. Cooperation among religions must be promoted. Religious circles should take the initiative in giving guidance and leadership for the attainment of peace in this world.

Organization and Activities

In regard to our denominational organization, we have two headquarters: one at Atami and one at Hakone. At these two places the God of Creation is enshrined and worshipped.

Japan is divided into seven districts. Each district has its office and its own staff. There are 95 churches, including those overseas, and 511 branch churches. There are about 2,000 teachers, more than 1,000 of whom are full time. The number of adherents is about 400,000.

Lecture meetings are held twice a month at the headquarters; but besides these there are many other meetings for the board of directors, teachers meetings, training institutes for teachers, and meetings to train adherents. At the branch offices there are conferences, consultations between the headquarters and the branches, meetings of the youth association, local teachers meetings, etc. At the individual churches there are special festival days, lecture days, training days, and special counselling and guidance days. The small branches conduct house to house counselling.

As for the churches overseas, there are churches in Hawaii with 1,034 members. In Los Angeles we have 712 followers, more than half of whom are non-Japanese. In Brazil the total is 370, and the Okinawa church has 404 members.

THE CHURCH OF WORLD MESSIANITY

As for our publications, for the church overseas there is a special newspaper. For Japanese believers we publish a newspaper called *Eikō*^a (*Glorious Light*), and a monthly magazine *Chijō Tengoku*^b (*Earthly Paradise*).

Foreign missions were started in February, 1953, when two missionaries were sent to Hawaii. Later these two missionaries proceeded to Los Angeles where the church is thriving. The members there have acquired a tract of land where they are trying to create a paradise for man. Objects of art have been sent to Los Angeles to let people there enjoy the spiritual influence of beauty.

A characteristic of this organization is that the recruiting of new believers is done by the believers themselves. Of course the teachers give some guidance, but the actual recruiting of new believers is done by the believers themselves.

Q: Will any disease yield to this treatment?

A. Yes, gradually. At present severe cases of cancer are not healed. It is possible that little by little, as we purify our souls, we will not need doctors.

Q. Are there cases of cancer being cured?

A. Yes.

Q. Is the faith healing method decided by the Founder or by the followers?

A. The principle method or doctrine does not change. It was decided by the Founder who acted in accordance with revelation.

Q. Could a follower receive the same revelation as the Founder?

a. 栄光 b. 地上天国

THE CHURCH OF WORLD MESSIANITY

A. There can be no comparison between them. The Founder was given a revelation which is not needed by the ordinary believer.

Q. How long does a treatment take?

A. A treatment takes longer if a person is deep in sin or needs more purification. However, treatments are always positive, even if a person does not believe.

Q. Are there set prayers for healing?

(Two teachers then demonstrated the method used in the case of a headache. As they sat opposite each other, one assumed the attitude of prayer. Ed.)

A. Divine light is channelled through my body as an instrument of healing. It takes about fifteen minutes.

Q. What is the make-up of the membership.

A. There are more young people than old. Those about thirty years old comprise 50% of the membership. There are young people's organizations in high schools and universities.

Q. How do they cooperate with other groups, such as the YMCA, for example?

A. As individuals they would naturally cooperate. As a group we cooperate through the youth section of the Union of New Religious Organizations.

Q. What is the relationship to the medical profession.

A. There is no relationship. Everything is up to the individual. As his faith becomes stronger, there is no need for doctors. I suffered from tuberculosis and even now have spots on my lungs, but I have no need for a doctor.

RELIGION AND MODERN LIFE II

Prepared by Yoshiro Tamura

(A report of three Round Table Conferences)

(Continued from Vol. I No. 3)

Note: The designations used to identify the religious tradition of the participants are as follows: B—Buddhist, C—Christian, both Catholic and Protestant, S—Shinto sects (Fusō-kyō, Misogi-kyō), SS—Shrine Shinto, O—Others (Konkō-kyō, Seichō-No-Ie, Tenri-kyō, World Messianity)

Manifestations of Modernization: De-mythologization, Laymanism, Tolerance and Unity.

C In the Christian field, Bultmann's de-mythologization may be a manifestation of the modernization of religion.

C I think it is. The Bible has the world-view which prevailed at the time it came into existence, but such a world-view cannot be accepted today.

Chairman I don't like the word de-mythologization. However, the mysterious nature of religion should be clarified by means of modernization.

C I should like to call attention to the fact that, though Christianity in the beginning had a very mythological (mythic) and symbolic form, in its expansion it was refined and re-interpreted to meet the need of the times as it developed.

B Layman-ism, that is, the layman-centered movement in the newer Buddhist and other sects may be a manifestation of modernization.

B The laymen's movement is a system in which the perpendicular relationship between man and an absolute is shifted

to the horizontal relationship between people. This is the awakening of human beings. In this sense, I think it is modernization. The question, however, is how to preserve the genuineness of religion.

In Buddhism the priesthood has existed since the time of Sakyamuni in order to maintain the purity of the faith. The priest is valuable as the ideal image for the layman and indispensable to religion. Shinran, who lived a layman's life, said that he was "neither priest nor layman." This meant that he was not simply a layman. In this point, I think we can find the genuineness of Shinran's Buddhism as a religion. The history of Buddhism has been developed through the tension between religious genuineness and the secular life. Shinran's attitude of "neither priest nor layman" indicates this. However, temple Buddhism gradually became fixed until the original meaning of the temple and priest was lost. Laymanism arose against such a tendency. So laymanism is not simply an acceptance of the secular life but is to preserve the genuineness of religion. Anyhow, we must use great prudence in choosing between the priest system and laymanism.

Chairman Is there any leader who takes the place of the priest in conducting ceremonies?

B In the layman system, a layman acts as a priest, while at the same time he himself leads a secular life. Many leaders are giving up their work and devoting themselves entirely to denominational business.

Chairman Isn't there a tendency for such leaders to become professional religionists?

B I think this is possible. In the beginning they handle denominational business along with their secular work, but as the number of believers increases and it is necessary to strengthen the sectarian system, specialists become necessary.

SS Isn't there a laymen's movement in Christianity also?

B In Christianity, however, the authority of God as the Absolute is maintained and the church or the priest is regarded as an agent of God. I think that as long as a God having absolute authority is set up, layman-ism in Christianity is not possible.

C In the Catholic Church of the Middle Ages this might have been the case, but afterwards the movement of communicating directly with God without the medium of Church or priest arose. I think this movement was a kind of layman-ism. Substantially speaking, the authority of God is the basis of human equality and does not allow any earthly authority to exist in his presence.

O Many new religious movements seem to be stressing daily life and rejecting the traditional sacred practices of the established religions. This develops the characteristics of layman-ism and results in a loss in influence over the religious life of the people. Consequently, a reactionary movement to recover the sanctity of the temple and priesthood occurred.

The denomination to which I belong came into existence from among the people. It has been close to them from the beginning. However, it has already acquired a denominational fixation in its propaganda and ceremonies, and in an hereditary system for the spiritual head. A sanctity has been attached to these, which results in a reactionary attitude.

Therefore, the problem lies in how to maintain religious sanctity while being immersed in the daily life of the people. I think that this is a major problem in the modernization of religion.

- C A feature of modernization is tolerance. However, there is a possibility that religion will then develop into syncretism.
- O The founder of the religion to which I belong was open-minded. He taught that any deity worshipped by the people should be respected. He even said that when one stood up from a stump on which he had rested he should have the attitude of giving thanks to it. This is not syncretism in which various deities are accepted as they are, but pays respect to the deities in which various pious men sincerely believe. It does not mean that one regards one's own religion as final and rejects the others, but that there should be mutual understanding and harmony. I think that this leads toward world peace.
- O The truth liberates man and emancipates him. All faiths should be reduced to one truth. Therefore, the fact that there have arisen various religions and sects, each claiming that it is the truest, must look very stupid from the viewpoint of God. Antagonism among religions and sects seems to be a manifestation of the stupidity, attachment, and greed of human nature. Disputes among countries and labor struggles may be said to have the same basis. I think that today is the time for an All-Religions-Reduced-to-One movement.
- O Do you mean that all should be reduced to the religion in which you believe?

O I mean that the various religions and sects should work under the consciousness that all religions are a manifestation of one truth, or that they are one in origin.

Chairman Even when it is theoretically understood that they are one, depending upon the locality and society, there are various ways of accepting them. It is for this reason that various religions and sects have come into existence.

C Catholicism is large, but it is not sectarian. It is united in many orders and the Pope. It may be regarded as very reactionary from the viewpoint of moderns, but it is a kind of complete society. It cannot necessarily be said to be reactionary or pre-modern.

B The problem of tolerance was taken up by the recent International Congress for the History of Religions. As for me, however, I doubt that it is good for religion to be tolerant. It can be said that tolerance is one of the characteristics of Oriental religions, but tolerance alone is not enough. Oriental religions cannot make a contribution to Occidental religions simply by being tolerant.

C Humanism seems to be developing as the basis of the current emphasis on tolerance, but it seems very much like sentimentalism.

B Inter-sectarian meetings, such as the recent Japan Buddhist Conference, are held quite often of late in order to find a common ground, but what emerges is usually something very weak and insipid. I think that it is questionable to seek simply unity. Each religion has its own unchangeable absolute standpoint which gives it its strength.

Chairman Prof. Heiler stressed the idea of the unity of re-

ligions when he spoke at the opening ceremony of the International Congress for the History of Religions. However, when I talked with him later, I found that he himself is a devout member of the German Lutheran Church. Christianity is rather too inclined to stress its absoluteness and has a tendency to become narrowminded. Therefore, he proposed a counter-movement to this and insisted on the unity of the various religions.

B A perpendicular and a horizontal relationship are the basis of order in human life. Buddhism has a horizontal character which aims at peace and calmness, and stands on the principle of equality, while Christianity has a perpendicular character which stresses ethical strictness. Each characteristic is shown clearly in the contrast between the structure of Christian churches and Buddhist temples, or in the image of Christ on the cross and the image of Shakyamuni reclining in nirvana.

B In this connection it may be said that Buddhism is static while Christianity is dynamic.

C If Buddhism is static, how about its modernization? I think that for the purpose of modernization it must have some elements by which it can come out dynamically in history.

F That Buddhism is static does not mean that it has no activity. The Buddhist concept of static includes the idea of activity with perfect freedom.

Chairman In other words, the static nature of Buddhism should not be understood to mean immobility.

C I think that Christianity can be active in respect to actual life because it keeps strictly to its own religious standpoint

and is uncompromising. It can be said that because Christianity is uncompromising it can confront modern times quite positively and can lead toward the future; while because it is tolerant, Buddhism does not confront actuality but becomes passive or static. This results in compromise. In this regard Buddhism is too weak to give any guidance in the reform of actual conditions.

C I think that the tolerance of Buddhism is, conversely speaking, inclined to accept conditions as they are. For example, if Naziism appeared, Buddhism would have no motive power to resist it.

B Buddhism does not accept actual conditions as they are. It also has the power to destroy them. “Naturalness” (*jinen hōni*^a) in Buddhism can be realized through the destruction of the actual. It is the world of identification between denial and affirmation. Buddhism tries to save human nature, that is, attachment to the ego, which cannot be saved by social reformation.

B A characteristic of Buddhism lies in “non-ego” (*muga*^b) or “a self-consciousness of the formless self.” It means the establishment of the free, fundamental subjectivity which, confronting actuality itself, reforms actuality and creates history instead of drawing deductions from a premise or a fixed, dogmatic position.

B It cannot be denied that because Buddhism had no premises and no fixed standpoint, it became involved in compromises with secular matters, such as the times, the country, and popular feelings. Herein lies the reason why Buddhism is

a. 自然法爾 b. 無我

rich in tolerance and at the same time faces the danger of secularization. Therefore, throughout the history of Buddhism almost all the priests who have been respected as the founders of sects, were men who gave deep thought to the genuineness of Buddhism as a religion and its concern with every day life. The founders of the so-called Kamakura Buddhist sects, who created a kind of Buddhist reformation, for example, clearly stressed the sacred world of the Buddha and the Law against the world of ordinary men, the law of the state, and worldly practices. Nevertheless, this is fundamentally different from the view that the sacred Kingdom of God is established in advance and everything is derived from it.

Modernization Unnecessary

B No matter how far the modernization of doctrinal expressions and rational explanations may go, and no matter how much the structures or the systems may be rationalized and improved, I wonder if, in comparison with what is accomplished by the crystalization of naive religious insights, this process is really modernization.

In Christianity de-mythologization and the colloquial translation of the Bible are being tried, and in the modern Buddhist world Japanese or colloquial translations of the scriptures are demanded. These may be regarded as modernizing movements. But in Japan Buddhism is doing very well in the daily life of the people as it is. I cannot but doubt whether or not modernization idealized by the intellectuals is absolutely necessary. I am afraid that the very effort to modernize may be an obstacle to the spontaneous

understanding of something that is perceived by the public without the device of modernization.

Moderns are living in modern times and there is no reason for them to be modernized. The religions of today are already spreading without the help of modernization. Therefore, there is no necessity to modernize.

B Because you are only living within a closed sect, you seem to have such an idea. I think that in order to truly activate Buddhism, it is necessary to abolish the established sects and the temples of Buddhism.

Chairman I have tried by myself to translate the Buddhist scriptures into a modern language in order to modernize Buddhism, but I have found that what were authorized as the Buddhist scriptures are no longer canons any more. For example, in Pure Land Buddhism the *Amida*^a, *Muryōju*^b and *Kanmuryōju*^c sutras are recited before the Buddha as the most noble; but what is most frequently read in present day daily life, is the *Tan'i-shō*^d. This book was hardly read before the Meiji era, but recently most of the people who talk about Pure Land Buddhism are reading it.

The *Amida* Sutra is recited before the Buddha, while the *Tan'i-shō* is read in a study or on a streetcar. Thus, we find that in two or three decades a great difference has taken place in the attitude of people toward the scriptures. Therefore, it would be meaningless to translate the *Amida* Sutra into modern language. While the priests are taking pains to change the decorations of the Buddhist altar or to change the matting into chairs in order to modernize, the popular

a. 阿弥陀 b. 無量寿 c. 觀無量寿 d. 歎異抄

good sense of the people is progressing ahead of them.

C Do you mean that there is no necessity at all for Buddhism to modernize or adapt itself to society?

Chairman It needs only polishing at the roots. In which case modernization might be useless.

S In this regard, it is the same with Shinto. Shinto is most primitive and is very naturalistic. For this reason, we feel something more strange and antagonistic to Christianity than to Buddhism and Confucianism.

B I do not say that there is no necessity for modernization. I mean that, in order to revive the various sects which have become formalized, they should return to their original pure position.

S From the standpoint of Shinto, this means a return to something essential and naive. It is undeniable that in several points religion should be transformed with the times, but this does not mean flattery of the times. Water changes its speed with the time and place, but it never loses itself.

SS I think that the "religionization" of the modern times is more important than the modernization of religion. Though we are dissatisfied with the times, we have no reason to be dissatisfied with religion or the kami.

B I think that it is very good to return to the spirit of the sectarian founder and to the genuine sectarian teachings; but for that purpose the past ways of the established sects should be destroyed to some extent. In this sense the "new religions" or the laymen religions have developed from the established denominations.

Chairman The reason why the modernization of religions is

taken up as a problem may lie in the fact that religion is revealing its conservative and anachronistic character.

B In regard to conservatism, which do you mean is conservative, religions in general or the priests?

Chairman For example, the Japanese people who gave birth to Shinto and received both Buddhism and Christianity should be questioned. Even if religion itself has a tendency to return to its original form, it returns in order to go ahead. Therefore, it cannot be said definitely that religion itself is conservative.

S Religion is of such a nature that one should attack it with one's true heart. In this sense, in religion non-modernization may be best modernization.

C I said a little while ago that modernization might be unnecessary or impossible in the field of art and religion. In the field of art, for example, which are more excellent, modern paintings or those of the past? Even though the technique may be modern, I wonder if they are of much more value than things archaic. Comparison is useless. The same thing may be said about religion. So long as religion exists in the world, it has to be expressed in a form adaptable to the time and the place. For this reason the denominational system or the manner of expressing a doctrine, for example, should be modernized. But along with this a statement of doctrine should always be criticized by returning to its origin. In religion a return to the original doctrine is modernization in its true sense. Protestantism is always returning to the original spirit of primitive Christianity, thereby criticizing the modern current age.

C The truths of each religion necessarily wear a robe of the world's image and the human image of the past. Our duty is to abolish the world image and the human image of the past and to lay hold on the eternal truth which is to be given to moderns who have quite a different world view and human image.

In modernization in this sense, however, care should always be taken in regard to the fear that religious truth easily flatters and compromises with the trend of the times and the provincial cultural heritage. The result of this is that religion becomes their servant.

The modernization of religion is necessary, but it should not submit to or become the slave of the modern spirit. Instead, it must be the master.

IV Criticism of Modernization

More views were expressed to the effect that the modernization of religion is unnecessary: an idea that was related to the criticism of modernization in general. Some felt that in the present age modernization is revealing its defects, and that religion, instead of being modernized, should criticize modernization, expose its defects, and correct them. However, there was no unanimity of opinion.

Loss of individuality : De-humanization

S I think that the individual has been spoiled by the present age. Therefore, the mission of religion is to take these spoiled men from society one by one and save them.

B If there is something that religion can emphasize in the twentieth century, I think it is the self-awakening of the indivi-

dual in relation to history. At present the individual is too absorbed in the group or in society.

C Today, human beings are being controlled by things other than human beings. For example, they are being controlled by the capital which they have created. In society they are reduced to mere cogs in wheels. Herein arises the necessity for a self-awakening of one's personal existence and the recovering of oneself. I think, however, there is a difference between Buddhism and Christianity in regard to the way to catch the personality.

S In the present age, as a result of mechanization and rationalization, science is making rapid progress and the social structure has come to have great power. The individual human being has, so to speak, fallen into a state of being part of a machine. Man is pursuing a course of dehumanization. His independent subjectivity has been lost. Isolation, emptiness, dryness and the like have possessed him. In order that he may overcome such a state and follow a path of wholesome development, nothing is more necessary for man than to recover the means by which he can be made alive. This means is the transcendental and the absolute, which is beyond human and relative things. I think that there is no way of developing men wholesomely without it. This should be the proper aim of religion. In this sense, I said a little while ago that the religionization of modern times is more necessary than the modernization of religion.

S Does the religionization of the modern times mean that religion itself may remain unchanged?

SS In the fundamental points, yes, but not in minor matters.

- S** If modernization means the loss of individuality, criticism of this kind of modernization would be, so to speak, the modernization of religion or even going ahead of modernization!
- S** Under the influence of the weekly magazines and television the knowledge of moderns is becoming very stereotyped. The loss of individuality can be said to be a phenomenon of the development of mass communications. However, it would be better to actively establish individuality by inspiring each person with a breath of independent subjectivity rather than to recover individuality by criticizing and destroying such a phenomenon. It is important for religion to brighten individuality which lies at the basis of social organizations.
- B** It is not good to go too far in criticizing such modernization. Japanese religious leaders are inclined to do so in order to defend their own unmodernized religion.
- C** One problem may be whether or not we can slow down the speed of this speed age or do something like the *Okuno-hosomichi*.* We should think about how to overcome the influence of mass communications and other world trends instead of going backwards.
- C** It can be said that modern rationalism has reached the limit and that it should be overcome. If we think this is easy, however, we may fall into the danger of seeking in the pre-modern the basis upon which we are going to overcome modern rationalism. This danger is especially felt in the case of Japan; but if this is done, modern rationalism is not going

* 奥の細道 literally, "the narrow way in the back country." The account of the travels in the Tōhoku district in the Tokugawa era written by the famous poet, Bashō. 芭蕉

RELIGION AND MODERN LIFE II

to be overcome. On the contrary, we will be following a retrogressive course. Many religious leaders seem little aware of this.

B It would be dangerous for us, by use of the word "de-humanization," to regard the current phenomenon with hostility. Care must be taken not to define religion in anti-social terms of spiritual reaction or anti-sociality. Today, the day of mechanization, we can neither go back to nature nor rely upon a master-artist, so we should seek for a new meaning of a human being confronting such a situation.

O It is necessary for us to find the reason why modern society has been reduced to the loss of individuality and de-humanization, even though it started from the standpoint of the self-awakening of the individual and the affirmation of human beings.

Chairman The loss of individuality and de-humanization did not take place at the same time that science progressed and modern rational society was established. On the contrary, in the beginning there was a self-awakening of the individual and human emancipation which later on assumed the aspect of the loss of individuality and de-humanization.

C Man may have been a caged bird before the modern age, but he had security. When he became free he flew high for a time but fell down because he had no security.

C I think that the loss of humanity is not of modern origin, but dates from the dawn of history. Therefore, I do not agree with the idea that the loss of humanity should be emphasized.

C I think that in Europe and America today, this is not

simply the modern age (*kindai*^a) but the “contemporary” age (*gendai*^b)*. This means that the three features mentioned before, that is, separation of church and state, the establishment of rationalism, and individualism went too far and resulted in the modernized age coming to a time when it should be criticized. This is today, the “contemporarized” age.

B The question seems to be a complicated one. As features of modernization, the self-awakening of the individual on the one hand, and socialization, on the other, have been mentioned. Does this mean that modernization began with the individual awakening and that as a result of socialization individuality has been lost today? If so, why has the individual awakening been transferred to socialization? Or, does it mean that although the individual awakening took place simultaneously with socialization at the beginning of the modern age, it nevertheless has been lost today for some reason or other? Which is correct?

C I don't think that the individual awakening arose simultaneously with socialization. For example, capitalism developed from the awakening of the individual. Socialism arose later for the reason that human beings are social existences and no human problems can be solved without consideration of the social structure. I think that this is a feature of socialization. In regard to socialization, besides the growth of the social consciousness, the development of de-humanistic mechanization, such as mass communications, should be considered. I think that this is responsible for de-humanization

* Generally speaking the term *gendai* refers to the post-Wold War I period.
Ed. a. 近代 b. 現代

consequent upon the loss of individuality.

- C From the viewpoint of the economic system and the social structure, it can be said that the individual awakening did not arise simultaneously with socialization; but from the spiritual point of view, it may be said to have been simultaneous. In other words, the individual awakening is an awakening of the independent subjectivity of human beings independent of God, and socialization is an awakening of human society which is independent of the Church. Both of them have something in common in respect to the awakening of an independent human existence.

Anyway, I think that today such an awakening of an independent human existence has gone too far and has resulted in collapse. This makes us reflect that, in order to make man a true man and communal society a true communal society, something which supports man at his foundation is a prerequisite. Then, where shall we find such a support? This is a question which is imposed on us today.

Materialism and the Collapse of the Community System

- B Today, people are interested solely in the materialistic side of life and lack in spiritual contact with each other. Struggles are always coming to the fore and spreading to the masses. Before we decide that these tendencies are defects of the social structure because of political poverty, we should make an effort to implant a religious mind in each individual and arouse gratitude, love, and hope within him. Our innermost mind is seeking after something beyond the material. For this reason I think that what religion should do today

RELIGION AND MODERN LIFE II

is to meet the minds of the individuals one by one.

- O** The social problems of today involve something that can not be solved only by the material. What kind of a religion can cope with society today? I think that it is a religion which gives us mental calmness. For what is missing in society today and, therefore, what people want, is this mental calmness beyond the material life. I think that meeting this need is the way religion should function in society today.
- O** In the denomination to which I belong, being blessed with material goods is regarded as a fundamental condition for happiness, but this is not everything. Truth, goodness, and beauty are also stressed. Unless one experiences these one cannot gain true happiness. Concretely speaking, one should be partial neither to the spiritual nor the material and in regard to -isms, neither to capitalism nor to socialism. In short, one should maintain an attitude of moderation.
- B** Feudalism and the family system has been decadent recently. Loyalty to a master and kindness to parents must be seriously reconsidered.
- O** I think that this point of view reveals the very first step in the loss of humanity. The blood relationship and affection between parent and child, for example, can never be cut off. The tendency to deny this kind of a relationship is a sign of the loss of humanity.
- B** What do you think about such institutions as old people's homes and nursery schools?
- O** The necessity for these institutions shows the degeneration and misfortune of today.
- C** In Christianity, all people come into contact with others as

neighbors, and from this viewpoint the natural relationship between parent and child should be transcended. The blood bond in the community of the past is disappearing today. Is Shinto trying to prevent it?

O The blood relationship cannot be broken even though we try to do it, and it should not be. If it is broken, man is reduced to an abstract human relationship. In the so-called love for humanity such abstract relationship is sensed.

Chairman You said that in Christianity the natural relationship between parent and child is cut off. What do you mean by this?

C This mean that all parents and children exist equally as sons of God before Him. In Christianity, life is regarded as a gift of God.

B Today the blood-related community is open and it is being developed into a professional community or a class community. I don't deny blood relation, but I cannot agree with the opinion that blood relationship can exist only in the past family system. The ethics based on the blood relationship changes and develops. So I think that the breakdown of the past blood relationship does not mean the loss of humanity.

Buddhism realizes human existence in the fundamental and universal character of human nature. For instance, in Jōdo Shin Buddhism a human being is regarded as a sinful traveler who in this life seeks an eternal resting place. This shows that Jōdo Shin Buddhism catches the human being in his universal individuality.

Of course, we can not ignore the historical society where there is a blood or professional relationship. The so-called

world religions can be said to be successful in the unity of universal individuality and the related society.

SS It should be considered that, although people have cried for emancipation from all restrictions and all communities aim at freedom and equality, they have come face to face with de-humanization.

Shinto regards the individual as existing in cooperation with others, instead of existing independently. This is also the essential character of a human being. Therefore, it is quite natural that the modern emancipation from the community has turned to de-humanization.

Shinto opposes the idea of individualism, that is, the idea that a human being is independent and self-existing. It tries to emphasize the sense of community. Of course, the community should develop itself towards the oneness of mankind, but for this purpose, a race, or a state should be established first of all. I think that liberalism and democracy today take no account of this point. Therefore, it cannot be the ideology for the human community.

Christianity and Capitalism

C Protestantism puts doctrine within the control of reason, resulting in losing the heart of Christianity. According to Protestantism, human society is a gift of God, therefore, we cannot but follow the movement of society. This looks like the affirmation of human society or human-reason but, in fact, we are forsaken and obliged to make our own way. In contrast with this, Catholicism regards human society or the human reason as always being supported by

God whose wisdom is constantly working in it. In this sense, Catholicism is rather more positive toward the actual world and more active in the movement of actual society.

C What Protestantism stresses is human responsibility. In other words, human society is given by God in order that we may live sincerely with responsibility.

C I think that it is Protestantism that created capitalism. Has capitalism really brought happiness to mankind?

C About this point there is a good deal of misunderstanding. Max Weber, who brought forward this problem, tried to make clear that there are many types of capitalism and that Occidental and typical capitalism developed under the influence of Protestantism. This kind of capitalism meant at first emancipation from feudalism.

C I think that capitalism was right in its growing period, when it fulfilled its most modern, progressive duty. It is a fact, however, that later capitalism reached its limit and had to emerge from this. If there were some errors in Protestantism, these may be seen in its ignorance of such conditions and in regarding capitalism as fixed and absolute. Because the proper function of Protestantism lies in criticizing and protesting against the times from the standpoint of its original basis, there is no doubt that Protestantism should be critical of present-day capitalism.

C What counter-measures to capitalism have been adopted by Protestantism?

C In my personal opinion, capitalism is preventing the individual from living as a man in the true sense. Therefore, the necessity for a reformation is pressing.

The Crisis of Today

B The aspect of suffering is strong today. Today is recognized as a day of human crisis. The nature of this suffering lies in the fact that the human crisis in actual society cannot be solved by our own hands or by humanism. In this sense I think that the position of the other-power faith, Jōdo Shin Buddhism, can solve the crisis of today.

B Education in Japan today aims at forming a naturalistic human image and is based upon enlightening and rationalistic ideas, or the concept that a human being is fundamentally good and develops endlessly. However, looking at actual human life, there can be found many dark sides which cannot be dissolved by such ideas. This may be a reason for such a faith as Pure Land Buddhism, which emphasizes the nature of ordinary sinful man beyond rational morality.

C It may be said that no time has been more in need of emphasizing God's authority and the *raison d'être* of religion than today.

C Religion should emphasize the eschatological awareness of the present time.

Chairman You mean that the modernization of religion lies in regarding today as a crisis, don't you?

THE NEW RELIGIONS OF JAPAN

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— Continued from the September issue —

General Characteristics of the New Religions

In the complete absence of a really intensive scholarly analysis of the New Religions of Japan, all generalizations concerning them must be regarded as tentative. It is with this admission that I set forth here my own generalizations, which for the most part are derived impressionistically from contacts with the sects which have just been described. As I have reflected upon these experiences, it has seemed to me that, as a generic group, the New Religions reflect two broadly general characteristics within which individual sects manifest certain variations.

1. *Functionally the New Religions are crisis religions.* Whether they

originated in the days of the social quakes that accompanied the decline of the Tokugawa Shogunate and the beginning of the Meiji Restoration in the mid-nineteenth century or emerged from the chaos of World War II, these sects are prime examples of the manner in which religion may be employed, when crisis has laid bare the elemental needs of man, to intensify the essential emotions in his life and thus to restore apparent stability. For over a century social crisis has been endemic in Japan. The causes and manifestations have varied in detail, but the crisis itself, in a large measure, has been unrelieved, particularly as it has affected the depressed classes in that land. It is from the people of such classes—naive and unsophisti-

THE NEW RELIGIONS OF JAPAN

cated as they are—that the New Religions draw the majority of their devotees. To them they promise, either explicitly or implicitly, some or all of four boons by which social crisis may be, or may seem to be, alleviated.

(1) *They promise physical health.*

A large number of the New Religions practice "faith healing," and apparently most of the others also are, in some sense, guarantors of physical health. Not uncommonly the teaching is propounded that illness is illusory, a factor which often suggests comparisons between some one or another Japanese sect and Christian Science. While there is no indication that bizarre healing practices are diminishing, it is perhaps very significant that some of the most successful sects associated with "faith healing" (notably Tenri-kyo and Rissho-kosei-kai) have established modern hospitals staffed with reputable medical doctors who usually are not devotees of the sponsoring sect. Apparently such a policy is motivated in part by a desire to overcome unfavorable publicity and to achieve a degree of sophistica-

tion more appropriate to their numerical size.

(2) *They promise material well-being.*

Prosperity for all of their devotees, or at least a sufficiency of essential goods, seems to be a general goal of the New Religions. Their concern with economic insecurity may lead them on occasion to sociological analyses and remedies, but characteristically they attempt to convince the harrassed individual that his greatest need is for the rectification of his own mind and heart. Hence, he is invited to take the way of religious faith and ritual performance as the means by which he may remove from his own life that which hinders him in his quest for prosperity.

(3) *They promise peace of mind.*

Many of the New Religions advocate the adoption of certain formulae and other techniques for overcoming worry or fear or for relieving interpersonal tensions. It is an impressive fact that the devotees of these sects seem almost invariably to be joyful and optimistic and in most cases, excepting

the occasional fanatics, to live harmoniously within their social groups. That their religion may be an artificial or superficial "tranquilizer" of sorts must be acknowledged, but its apparent benefits are, nevertheless, considerable.

(4) *They offer a sense of community identification.*

Social solidarity traditionally has been a part of the Japanese ideal, but in its realization the masses of the people sometimes have been reduced to the position of functioning parts in a great machine. The New Religions, through policies of friendliness and sympathy, have helped their believers to become aware of themselves as persons working in concert with other persons toward the accomplishment of desirable and seemingly attainable goals.

2. *Doctrinally the New Religions are syncretistic.* This fact is manifested in two forms. First in most instances the great mass of Japanese folk religion provides the basic materials from which these various sects have been compounded. This is a source which in itself represents the coalescence of many

elements of diverse origin, some native and some imported. Indeed, the admixture of religions is one of the signal features of Japanese cultural history. Second, most of the New Religions receive their distinctive character from historic founders, but in the elaboration of key ideas the founders, or their successors, are likely to draw quite generously from widely varied sources. Particularly in their effort to achieve doctrinal sophistication, the leaders of many of the sects have utilized some of the doctrines of Buddhism and Christianity. It is somewhat ironical that these two great universal religions, now seemingly unable on their own terms to challenge the Japanese people, unwittingly have become the source of "saving" words spoken in the name of gods other than their own.

Analysis by Analogy

The more I consider the New Religions of Japan the more I am persuaded that a comprehension of this phenomenon is essential to any profound understanding of the total complex of contemporary Japanese

life and culture. Therefore, I have been moved to inquire whether there might be available to me some additional method of analysis by which I could push on to a degree of understanding relatively more advanced than that which is reflected in the recording of my impressions. It has occurred to me that some increase in understanding might be afforded by relating the New Religions to certain functional analogues for which more adequate data are available.

Analogically, the New Religions invite comparison with the "messianic" cults of primitive societies, such as the "Ghost-Dance Religion" of the American Indians and the "Cargo Cults" of New Guinea. These cults are examples of a socio-religious phenomenon which, for over a half century, has been reasonably well understood by anthropologists.¹² Among such cults,

wherever they have been discovered, there is discernible a remarkably standard pattern of development in which at least five factors are recurrent: (1) social crisis intensified by an intrusive culture, (2) a charismatic leader, (3) apocalyptic signs and wonders, (4) ecstatic behavior, and (5) syncretic doctrine. The milieu from which they arise, described in the words of anthropologist Margaret Mead, is the "ferment of half-abandoned old and half-understood new."¹³

It is quite clear that these primitive "messianic" cults are to be understood as the reactions of various in-groups to certain overt threats to their traditional existence at times when radical transition has already begun. In such a situation the integrity of a group thus threatened is doomed if it chooses either to retreat into

¹² The literature on the subject includes the following: Paul Bailey, *Wovoka, the Indian Messiah*, (Los Angeles: Westernlore Press, 1957); Alexander F. Chamberlain, "New Religions," *Journal of Religious Psychology*, VI (1913), 1-49; Margaret Mead, *New Lives for Old* (New York: Morrow & Co., 1956); James Mooney, *The Ghost Dance Religion*, 14th Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology for 1892-93 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1896).

¹³ Margaret Mead, *New Lives for Old* (New York: Morrow & Co., 1956), pp. 214-15.

the old or to dash precipitately into the new. Its only defense lies in a paradoxical commitment to reaffirm the old and at the same time to reform it, to repudiate the new and simultaneously to adopt it. Such a paradox cannot possibly be directly converted into polity, but it can be resolved in a religious experience and thus become the means of reaffirming an impression of in-group solidarity and the motivation for developing new patterns of group behavior.

It appears that in general these same conditions figure importantly in the rise of the New Religions in Japan and that, in the two instances, the functional roles of these sects are analogous. If we had available to us more complete data, perhaps by spelling out the character of this parallelism in still more precise detail, we should be enabled to see more clearly the generic relationship of the New Religions and to understand more adequately their significance as a cumulative socio-religious movement in modern Japan. To propose such a thesis, however, is not to suggest that the Japanese are

"primitives"; it is rather to invoke a familiar principle of anthropology that the careful analysis of a recurrent phenomenon in relatively homogeneous and circumscribed primitive societies may reveal certain principles of social behavior that are equally prevalent, though less readily discernible, in more sophisticated cultures.

Japanese Reaction to the New Religions

While the New Religions have attracted millions of followers from among the Japanese masses, with the possible exception of Seicho-no-Ie they have not won many devotees among the intelligentsia, nor have they sparked any considerable spiritual awakenings among students on the university campuses. Indeed, although some of the best minds in Japan are still dedicated to struggling with religious issues, the trend of interest among intellectuals is definitely away from religious concerns. Even so, the phenomenal growth of the New Religions, particularly within the last decade, has not failed to attract attention within the ranks

THE NEW RELIGIONS OF JAPAN

of the intelligentsia. The various types of reaction from this quarter are quite instructive concerning certain details of the quandary confronting modern Japan. In general, reaction is critical and hostile, but its harshness usually is tempered somewhat by sympathy for the frustrated and by a feeling perhaps of nostalgia for "the days when Japan had a soul."

1. *Reaction of Religious Leaders.*

In conversing with various head priests and educators representing the old traditional religions of Japan, I gained the impression that as a group they look upon the New Religions as perversions of true religion perpetrated by greedy impostors. Still, it seemed also that the presence of the New Religions had so engendered within these leaders a sense of their own need for repentance that they were inclined to look upon the intrusive sects with a certain degree of magnanimity. Since this impression proved difficult to document

from the data which I had collected, I turned to one of my close friends, a lay Buddhist scholar and author of a book criticizing the New Religions,¹⁴ and asked him to set down for me an outline of his reactions to these cults. His statements tend to corroborate my impression. First he belabored the New Religions severely for their bold eclecticism, for the unprincipled opportunism of their leaders who prey upon the ignorant and suffering, and for their fanatical and misleading exaggerations of the benefits of their religions. However, he turned next to examine the conditions which had fostered the rise of the New Religions and proceeded to list thirty-two points detailing the failure of Buddhism to minister to the Japanese people in this period of their greatest social crisis. While he deplores the rise of the New Religions, he recognizes that the state of the traditional religions is permissive of their rise. Said he: "The

¹⁴ Inagaki Saizo. Principal of Seitoku Gakuin, a high school of the Jodo Shin sect of Buddhism in Kobe. Since then I have found further corroboration from another source: Ariga Tetsutaro, "The So-Called 'Newly-Arisen Sects' in Japan," *Occasional Bulletin*, Volume V, Number 4, March 29, 1954 (New York: Missionary Research Library).

THE NEW RELIGIONS OF JAPAN

old religions have given room for the activities of the New Religions.It is lamentable that almost all the sects of Buddhism have lost their power and their truth." The masses just will have the solace of religion, and if the old forms no longer are productive, new forms will arise to fill the breach.

2. *Judgment of the Secular-minded Intelligentsia.*

Because of the traditionally close relationship between the Buddhist and Shinto religions and family and community loyalty, many Japanese intellectuals participate formally and occasionally in the rites of one or both of these religions. However, for the most part, such participation cannot be construed as evidence of real personal faith. The intelligentsia of Japan is rather thoroughly, if uneasily, secularized. The nature of that secularization, as well as the uneasiness with which it is sported, is manifested in various aspects of

the prevailing sophisticated judgment regarding the New Religions. It seems likely that the order in which these are set forth here represents a fairly common sequence in the intellectual's appraisal of these sects.

(1) *The New Religions are amusing.* Almost anyone, no matter what his origin or experience, can become the prophet of a god and amass a group of followers with relative ease. The teachings are ridiculously superficial and illogical, and oftentimes they are made to appear even more ludicrous by the nature of the problems to which they are directed.¹⁵ One college professor writes: "I even burst out laughing sometimes when I am reading the doctrines of some New Religions."¹⁶

(2) *The New Religions are unsavory and dangerous.* Many Japanese intellectuals find the New Religions to be not only laughably ridiculous but also disquietingly so.

¹⁵ For example, Taniguchi, the founder of Seicho-no-Ie, begins one of his books (*Divine Education and Spritual Training of Mankind*) with a series of case histories relating how parents' acceptance of his teaching had resulted in curing their children of the habit of bed-wetting.

¹⁶ Naramoto Tatsuya, "Birth of Gods" (Kamigami no Tanjo), *Asahi Shimbun*, October 16, 1955. Translated by Miss Chieko Miyazaki.

Rather generally they are repulsed and alarmed by much that they see and hear. For example, the following reaction, recently published, appears to be a fairly typical one:

I once glanced at a propaganda pamphlet issued by one of these new religions, and found myself more struck by something nasty in the general tone than by any merits or demerits in the actual ideas it propounded. The religions of the past which are worthy of the name somehow give an impression of cleanliness, but about certain of the new religions there clings an odour that is distinctly unsavoury.¹⁷

Such feelings of disgust are intensified still further by the recognition that the activities of many of these sects are a cover-up for extortion and quackery of many sorts. Weak and ignorant people regularly are the pray of the greedy; the ill and confused frequently are brought to a still greater harm. Thus, a Buddhist scholar, in awkward but expressive English, voiced his concern in this statement: "Of course, some

patients will be glad being restored their health, but we must know how many innocent people hurry to the grave untimely because of their not consulting the doctors."¹⁸ In another instance, a foreign resident of Japan wrote to the editor of *The English Mainichi* citing the studies of a prominent Japanese psychiatrist to allege that there is an "increasing wave of insanity produced by the present popular religions attracting followers through faith healing and promises of material success."¹⁹

(3) *Still, the New Religions are timely, while the old religions have failed.* Since antiquity one of the marks of erudition in the Far East often has been a recognition of the social function of religion. Man has an incurable penchant for seeking help in religion. This is a fact which may be deplored but which must be faced, and the possibility should always be considered that even naive and gross forms of religion may be utilized to pro-

¹⁷ Masumune Hakucho, "Thoughts on the New Religions," *Japan Quarterly*, IV (1957), 66.

¹⁸ Inagaki Saizo in a personal note to the author.

¹⁹ Litsanidi, *The English Mainichi*, May 23, 1957.

duce socially useful results. Thus, many of the intellectuals in Japan, conscious of the broad base of naive piety in their land, know that in this period of social crisis the integrative ministry of religion is needed. The people require it; the old religions are static and unresponsive; the way is open for the New Religions. This may be acknowledged somewhat resignedly, as in the following statement.

Religions, even religions as powerful as Christianity once was, may wane; yet human beings still need some source of spiritual strength. These are troubled times, and it is perhaps inevitable that if the old religions have lost their authority man should be ready, if only his spiritual weakness is played on, to entrust himself body and soul to something such as these new religions. It may be very right and proper, from a practical social point of view, to eradicate the harmful effects on men's minds of these new religions, but come what may, the pious soul doubtless will still cling to his beliefs.²⁰

On the other hand, this situation is faced more hopefully by certain others. For example, the man who laughed at the doctrines, as being superficial and indiscreet, later

testified that "after deep consideration you will have a feeling more friendly toward the New Religions than toward the so-called 'existing religions.'" ²¹ Certainly, he admitted, they are simple and naive, but they are dynamic. They are conscious of the problems and sufferings of people and are directed toward their alleviation. Furthermore, he asks, "Which is it that has a stronger prayer for peace, the existing religions or the New Religions?" Perhaps it would be generally acknowledged among the intelligentsia that the New Religions have the right concerns, even though their motivations and techniques may be questionable.

(4) *Time will tell which of the New Religions are opiates and which "true" religions.* There is some disposition in Japan to say that the new concept of freedom of religion is too broad when it is permissive of such a development as the rise of the New Religions. However, it is my impression that the prevalent mood tends toward a *laissez-faire* attitude, which holds that,

²⁰ Masamune, *op. cit.*, pp. 67—68.

²¹ Naramoto, *op. cit.*

while most of the New Religions are ill-conceived, they ought to be left alone; for each one will progress only as far as it deserves to go. This apparently was the view of a noted Japanese historian when he said to me, "The New Religions must speak to ignorant people at first. As they mature they may become more profound. If they do not, others will arise to take their place."²² Furthermore, if certain ones of the New Religions do survive indefinitely, they may bring contributions of lasting value to Japanese society. "Who knows," says another learned man, "this age of science may yet produce a new Christ or a new Buddha who will weave a new world of illusion in a truly disinterested attempt to save the masses of mankind."²³

Conclusion

It might fairly be supposed that this survey of the New Religions of Japan would give rise to several questions concerning the eventual

significance of these sects. In conclusion, therefore, I shall attempt to anticipate three such queries and supply tentative answers to them.

1. *How lasting are the New Religions likely to be?*

There is about most of the New Religions an apparent shallowness and transitoriness. It is very likely that the careers of most of the individual sects will parallel that of the seed which fell in the shallow ground. Having germinated and sprung up rapidly, they will just as quickly fade away. However, given the broad base of naive piety that exists in Japan and a further prolonged period of social crisis, such sects as these will continue to rise and flourish. They are to be considered primarily as the by-products of the efforts of a disturbed society to achieve integrity and stability. Even so, some among these sects may even now be acquiring sufficient depth to become permanent factors in the religious life of Japan; indeed, some

²² Nakamura Naokatsu, retired Professor of History, Kyoto University. The comment was recorded by the author in a personal interview on June 14, 1957.

²³ Masumune, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

few of them may be playing a much more complex and portentous role than I have hitherto indicated. The questions which follow will point this up further.

2. Are the New Religions in any way related to the current general resurgence of traditional religions throughout much of Asia?

This is a difficult matter to assess. On the surface it would appear that the New Religions are alternatives to the traditional regions. Buddhism has been stagnant for several generations and suffered severe financial losses at the end of the war through the confiscation of timber and farm land which had belonged to the large temples. Shrine Shinto, because of its association with militarism, was discredited and restricted after the war, and has only recently recovered its earlier popularity. Perhaps it could be argued that, to the extent that they have caught up and further popularized certain elements of Buddhism and Shinto, the New Religions represent a resurgence of Japanese traditional religion, even though, with only a few exceptions, they do not func-

tion within the structure of the classical religions themselves. However, to follow this tack is to beg the question somewhat. It may be more instructive to focus this inquiry solely upon the exceptional movements which began as subjects of some branch of Buddhism. The history of the popularization of Buddhism in Japan suggests that, if there is to be a revival of Buddhism, it may result from such movements as these.

In a sense, the history of Buddhism in Japan is the story of a splintering-off process, in which the most significant divisions have occurred at those times when Buddhism was decadent and some great charismatic personality appeared to propound a radically new interpretation of the Buddhist message and its relevance to the human situation. The men in whom these movements centered became the revivers, subsequently the saints, of Japanese Buddhism, even though their doctrines often bear little resemblance to those of original Buddhism. The movements themselves, the "New Religions" of their day, became the dominant

THE NEW RELIGIONS OF JAPAN

bodies of Buddhism in that land. While among the current New Religions there does not appear to be any leader of the stature of Shinran or Nichiren, for example, it is well to note that, in the past, the revival of Buddhism has been accomplished in this wise, and it might happen again.

3. *What do the New Religions portend for the future of religion in Japan?*

There are too many variable, even unknown, factors in the religious situation in Japan for one to make a detailed prognostication concerning what will happen. However, it seems certain that any religion which would enlist a large following in that land must give an important place to certain emphases current among the New Religions. First, it must emphasize the possibilities of human nature. The Japanese generally believe that the Divine, however conceived, is ancestor to human nature, not another order of being. Second, it must undertake to resolve the ethical and social problems of this present world. The place for other-

worldly and opiate religions is likely to be drastically diminished in the new Japan. Third, it must be a tolerant religion, capable of utilizing creatively various elements from seemingly diverse traditions.

If this is an accurate reading of the omens, then there are certain implications to be considered by those who have an interest in the cause of specific religions in the future of Japan. These were summarized so forcefully for me by a Japanese historian,²⁴ that I am going to conclude by presenting, without commentary or endorsement, a digest of his statement. He said, in effect, Buddhism *cannot* speak to the new Japanese society; Christianity *does not* speak to it. Japan needs a new religion which combines the good points of Buddhism, Shinto, Christianity, and Chinese ethical teaching. This must be, not a mere collection, but a *new religion* coming through the old ones. This new religion probably will come more from Christianity than from Buddhism, but it must be something other than present Christianity. When Bud-

²⁴ Nakamura Naokatsu in an interview on June 14, 1957.

THE NEW RELIGIONS OF JAPAN

dhism came to Japan, it considered itself to be superior to the Japanese religions and, because of the backward condition of Japanese culture at that time, it could succeed on that assumption. Now the situation has changed. The foreign proponents of Christianity must see and accept the Japanese as their equals. The Western missionary who takes his stand on the same level with the Japanese can help to create a new religion in Japan based mainly on Christianity rather than Buddhism.

— Concluded —

REVIEWS

Religious Studies in Japan

*Edited by the
Japanese Association for Religious Studies and the
Japanese Organizing Committee of the
Ninth International Congress for the History of Religions.
Tokyo: Maruzen Company, Ltd., 1959.
pp. 507, ¥ 2,500.*

One does not have to be in Japan very long to discover that Japanese scholars are making tremendous contributions to the study of religions. In universities, research centers and various institutes, various projects are being carried out, usually in the midst of lively discussion, which increase our knowledge and understanding of the world of religion in general, and the religions of Japan in particular.

Unfortunately for lazy Americans (such as this writer) who have never learned Japanese, much of this material is written in Japanese and is therefore a closed book. Hence, such a volume as *Religious Studies in Japan* is to be warmly welcomed, for it brings together articles in English covering a wide

range of subject matter by forty-five outstanding Japanese scholars, many of whom are widely known in the West as well as Asia for previous work. In this volume one gets a glimpse of these minds at work, and the resulting view is impressive indeed.

Naturally, this wide range of subject matter is in itself a drawback. Although the articles have been grouped loosely according to convenient categories, there is very little continuity. The book is not particularly useful for systematic study, and was not intended to be used for such. Needless to say, if one were to survey the work of forty-five men in any country in any field, the resulting horizon would be rather uneven and the

REVIEWS

same is true here: there are hills and valleys, several jutting, craggy rocks, quite a bit of fog now and then, but some unmistakable mountain peaks not one but several Fujiyamas.

It was deemed wise by the editor of this journal and the reviewer to review this volume in two parts. The first half of the book consists essentially of methodological studies, and the second half primarily of studies related to particular religions. I have decided to review the second half first, for various reasons, and will review the first half of the book and make a concluding evaluation in the next issue of this journal.

Three articles on Shinto, by Messrs. Harada, Nishitsunoi, and Toda, may be said to represent an effort to delve deeper into Shinto in order to explicate in an adequate theoretical framework the meaning of Japanese traditional religion. The first two articles in this section, both of which relate Shinto to the total community, were extremely helpful. It is interesting to note that Prof. Toda, in referring to Jesus' resurrection,

says he was "revived" (p. 231), which is hardly what the New Testament means.

When Professor Miyamoto deals with his favorite topic of "Ultimate Middle" in Buddhism and Professor Nagao discusses "Buddhist Subjectivity," I am made aware, quickly and painfully, of my own weakness in philosophy, or of a lack of clarity in the two articles. Although it is certainly the former, I do not think Miyamoto really answers the charge that Buddhism is nihilistic (pp. 237—241).

My chief regret with Professor Nakamura's article is that I did not have his discussion of Buddhist ethics at hand when I was writing a thesis on that subject about two years ago. He calls attention to a central problem: if I and my neighbors are, according to Buddhist philosophy, "bundles of constituent elements, instantaneously perishing all the time, there is nothing which friendliness and compassion could work on." His answer is not completely adequate for me; for I do not see how ridding ourselves of the notion of Self and the "limitless expansion of the self

in a practical sense" really provide anything "to work on." (p. 277) Nonetheless, the article with its plea for a new approach in Buddhist studies, is superb.

Messrs. Hadano and Kanakura have given us meticulous detailed essays on Indian Tantrism and an Asvaghosha bibliography, respectively. Professor Nishi tries to prove that Mahayana Buddhism is the orthodox Buddhism, but it is quite plain that a Mahayanist is speaking, and that he deals with his evidence from a Mahayanist point of view. Professor Yamada gives an interesting sidelight on the role played by certain Indian kings in the formation of Mahayana sutras, although the title leads one to expect much more. Professor Yamaguchi's study of the Madhyamika criticism of Indian theism is carefully done, but I doubt if such criticism was the major reason why Buddhism was regarded as a heresy by orthodox Hinduism. For my part, Buddhism taught an essentially different *dharma*, of which the *anatta* theory was only a part.

Articles on Chinese Buddhism by Messrs. Masunaga, Sakamoto

and Tsukamoto widen the scope of our knowledge about an area that is difficult to approach these days. And one must say, that, in spite of the great value of D. T. Suzuki's works, the vast number of them in English have meant a one-sided view of Buddhism for the West. We must have other writers, like Professor Masunaga, speaking about Zen and other forms of Buddhism to the West.

I was both stimulated and disturbed by Professor Hanayama's article on Ekayana thought in Japan. One can see the obvious sincerity involved in this attempt to have "One Vehicle" which is intended to absolve the conflict between the "Little Vehicle" and the "Great Vehicle." But Hanayama himself shows quite clearly that the passion for Ekayana resulted in several new sects in Japanese Buddhism, which hardly furthers the unity supposedly inherent in the one vehicle concept.

Professor Takezono concludes the series of articles on Buddhism with an excellent account of the role of official governmental forces which fostered Buddhist-Shinto

REVIEWS

syncretism.

As we turn to Christianity, we find first Professor Ohata's attempt to delineate the "Jewishness" of the Apostle Paul, but Ohata is unconvincing in his argument which is drawn with slight exception from proof texts. The best one can say is that he does not see the forest for the trees. On the other hand, Professor Nakagawa's exposition of the first four verses of the Letter to the Hebrews is masterful in every respect: critical, exegetical and theological.

Professor Ariga's essay on the "Basic Structure of Christian Thought" should be read by everyone, regardless of his faith, who would understand the central concern of Christian theology. He points out that the being-becoming antithesis is clearly secondary to a hayathological motif in the Christian doctrine of God, deriving this staggering word from the Hebrew *hayah*, meaning "to become, to become, to happen, to act and to be, all in one." (p. 418)

In dean Kan's article on liturgics we see through the eyes of one who is still discovering new vistas

in the theology of Karl Barth, the theological patron saint of Japanese Protestantism. In President Kuwada's article, on the other hand, we follow the struggle of a man who sees that Barth's theology has its inadequancies, the most glaring being its failure to grapple with the problem of faith and culture. In this Barthian impasse, Kuwada turns to Paul Tillich whose discussion of faith and culture is most provocative. I do not see, frankly, how Kuwada will "combine Barth and Tillich," but Japanese industrialists and theologians are resourceful people and maybe the job can be done.

It is encouraging to see that Professor Matsumura is willing to discuss the work of philosophy and theology in some kind of relationship, and our keenest admiration is evoked by the responsible statement of the apologetic task by Professor Muto.

Two articles on Taoism, one by Professor Fukui on the schools of Taoism, and another by Professor Kubo on the introduction of Taoism to Japan, are extremely important contributions to this volume. We

know less, probably, concerning more articles such as these will
Taoism than in other religious follow.
roientation; it is to be hoped that Tokyo Richard Bush

(Dr. Bush will review the first half of *Religious Studies in Japan* and give a concluding estimate of the book as a whole in the next issue of this journal. Ed.)

Toshi Ji'in no Shakai-teki Kino (Social Function of the Buddhist Temple)

Edited by

Eisho Kawasaki, Sakiji Kashiwaguma, Chiko Sanada.

Tokyo: Cultural Interchange Institute for Buddhists, 1959,
pp. 145 and five maps. ¥750.

The state of Buddhist temples in Japan today is a matter of deep reflection for all Buddhists and others who are seriously concerned about the future of their faith in this country which historically has been so predominantly Buddhist. In a sense, there is nothing very unusual about the present situation. For decades, if not centuries, the temples have been subject to much severe criticism and their demise has been frequently predicted. Nevertheless, they have had a strange way in the past of surviving serious threats to their existence and have continued to exist and at times even flourish. However, today there appears to be something about the situation that would seem to portend a more ominous future, if matters are left as they are. Therefore, this study of the *Social Function of the Buddhist Temple* in Tokyo and Osaka by a group of Buddhist scholars and promoted by a Buddhist organization is especially meaningful. The basic premise of the study is, we assume, that temples should perform some social as distinct from religious functions if they are to continue to exist in modern society. There is nothing startling in any

REVIEWS

of the findings of this study. Everyone who knows anything about the subject is aware that temple compounds are relatively extensive and have little or no activity, but it is helpful to learn that an estimated 15% of the temples in Tokyo, but only 5.1% of those in Osaka, have facilities for social service, primarily kindergartens or nurseries. These are means for religious education, but they also stabilize temple income. Much has also been said about the depleted financial resources and declining income, but it comes as something of a surprise that 26.9% of the priests in Tokyo and 19.9%

of those in Osaka have additional employment, mostly as teachers or workers in government offices. Apparently in some cases the priestly function is actually the side job, so to speak. This means that the temples themselves in many cases could not continue to function without some supplementary income.

Much detailed data is to be found within the pages of this volume, which should be read by all those who wish to be informed on this subject. Foreign readers will find the six-page English summary and the five area maps very helpful.

Tokyo

Yoshio Tamura

THE RELIGIOUS WORLD IN JAPAN

Japanese Buddhism and World Buddhism

Senchu Murano

Editor of the *Young East*

Those who are beginning the study of Japanese Buddhism will soon realize that the sects of Japanese Buddhism are not equivalent to the denominations of Christianity. Strange to say, Japanese Buddhism has no sacred scriptures accepted as the canon common to all Japanese Buddhist sects. Japanese Buddhists have no sutra to chant in unison when they jointly have a Buddhist service. Moreover, in Japanese Buddhism more than one Buddha is worshipped. One sect worships one Buddha; another sect worships another. It appears that the sects of Japanese Buddhism are quite independent of each other.

When Buddhism was introduced into Japan in the sixth century the Japanese people did not know that Buddhism was divided into sects. Soon afterwards, however, they realized that the Buddhist images they enshrined in the same temple were not worshipped with the same degree of reverence by all Buddhists. Then, soon after they discovered Buddhist sectarianism, they witnessed the introduction from China of one Buddhist sect after another. At first these sects were studied in the same temple, but in the course of time temples were created that belonged to one or another of these sects and feuds began to arise between the sect-temples. For the past fourteen centuries sectarianization has developed so that now in Japan we have no temple which does not belong to one or another of the various Buddhist sects.

For many centuries Buddhism was patronized by the rulers of

THE RELIGIOUS WORLD IN JAPAN

Japan, but the reasons were political rather than religious or cultural. They wished to use Buddhism as a means of securing the peace of the country. They believed that the chanting of sutras would drive away enemies and make their country prosper. To them the antagonism between sects was annoying. They tried to stop the quarreling between sects by supporting them all equally. But it was to no avail. It was hopeless to try to get all the sects to cooperate in an intersectorian movement.

The first time Japanese Buddhist sects cooperated with each other was when the Meiji government suppressed Buddhism. If that anti-Buddhist policy had not been changed, Buddhism today might be more active in intersectorian cooperation. Unfortunately, the suppression of Buddhism by the Meiji government soon stopped and the sects recovered governmental patronage with the result that cooperation between the sects ceased. However, the new age, which opened with the Meiji Restoration, did not allow Japanese Buddhists to remain as they had been in previous centuries. Christian evangelistic activities, which had been renewed for the first time since 1639, were successful because the Japanese people at that time welcomed anything Western. Sectarian Shinto sects, which were formed towards the end of the Tokugawa period, became powerful enough to deprive the Buddhist sects of some of their votaries. The supporters of the older Buddhist sects were also reduced a great deal in number by new Buddhist sects which were not affiliated with any of the older sects. Another factor which weakened the older Buddhist sects came from science. Archaeological investigations resulted in the discovery of errors in the history of Buddhism prepared by sect authorities. Textual criticism revealed facts inconsistent with hitherto-established dogmatic principles.

The spread of education elevated the standard of knowledge of the people, depriving priests of their status as men of letters. The development of government-sponsored social welfare work les-

sened the social functions of temples. But what is more important here is the fact that at the beginning of the Meiji era, the religious authority of Buddhism was reduced to a considerable extent, because all Buddhists gave up celibacy and vegetarianism.

In order to cope with this unfavorable situation caused by various circumstances within and without, sect authorities did two things. First, they made a strenuous effort to propagate their own religion which, because of the security provided by governmental patronage, had been seriously neglected. Preaching in most cases had become mere lip-service and their philosophy based on sect dogmas had become a mere play of metaphysical terms.

Second, they sought a rallying point about which all sects could cooperate in opposition to the non-Buddhist or anti-Buddhist movement and they found it in the world of learning rather than in a joint organization of the representatives of Buddhist sects.

Buddhism and religion as a whole were scientifically investigated, while the hitherto-established doctrines were confined to a small room in the Buddhist universities. Specialists in the science of Buddhism were invited to the sectarian universities in complete disregard of the sect differences. For example, a Buddhist scholar, who was a priest of the Shin Sect, lectured on Buddhism at a university established by the Nichiren Sect. Thus, a sect meant no more than a community to which a particular religious organization belonged traditionally, — a situation not very far from the conception of caste in India. The science of Buddhism aimed at studying Buddhism in the light of history, philosophy, psychology, and sociology. It tried to justify the formation of the doctrines of all sects and not exclusively of a particular sect. Consequently, priest-students of sectarian universities who heard the lectures were discouraged from devoting themselves to propagating their own sect, and so the cooperative attitude of the sects towards each other was greatly promoted by this comprehensive study of Buddhism.

THE RELIGIOUS WORLD IN JAPAN

Defeat in World War II influenced Japanese Buddhism in many ways. Before the war, emperor-worship was seen everywhere in Japanese Buddhism. There were temples of which the chief abbots were members of the Imperial Family or noble families closely connected with the Imperial Family. Some temples had in their precincts halls which were specially dedicated to some emperor of the past. The sects which had these temples under their control treasured them because of emperor-worship. Some temples connected themselves with the Imperial Family through marriage. Temples were proud of having been visited by an emperor or a member of the Imperial Family, or of preserving things connected with the Imperial Family. Since the new Constitution of Japan was promulgated, however, things imperial have lost their meaning, giving a blow to Japanese Buddhism.

Moreover, during the War and the Occupation Buddhism suffered many set-backs. Air-raids destroyed most of the temples in urban districts; the loss of farmland by the enforcement of the Agricultural Land Reform Law impoverished temples in rural districts. Some priests left their temples for financial reasons. Christianity was re-imported triumphantly as the religion of the victors (but don't forget that Germany and Italy are also Christian countries). Christian churches and other Christian facilities were established with funds from abroad. Some Buddhist priests in a certain district had to donate to the construction of the International Christian University because they were told that the collection of the funds for the construction was ordered by the Allied Powers. New religions which sprang up one after another after the end of the war, deprived Buddhist sects of many of their supporters. The secession of temples from their mother sects, which was facilitated by the Religious Corporations Ordinance of 1945 and the Religious Juridical Persons Law of 1951, weakened the older Buddhist sects. Under these circumstances, interested priests of the various Buddhist sects convened

THE RELIGIOUS WORLD IN JAPAN

to find a way of surviving this critical state, and thus a cooperative attitude among the sects was promoted.

The development of international air service and mass communication after the end of World War II changed the attitude of Japanese Buddhists greatly. This enabled the Buddhists of the world to have their First World Buddhist Conference in Ceylon in 1950. Since then a World Buddhist Conference has been held biennially. Many Japanese Buddhists have participated in these conferences and have learned that there are more Buddhists in the world than they had anticipated. Consequently, they came to think that they should not be attached to sect differences, which seemed trifling matters when compared to the problems to be settled in regard to the intercourse between the Buddhists in the world. They were much more concerned about World Buddhism than about the intersectorianism of Japanese Buddhism. Their eyes were directed toward the world. This enabled them to expedite the movement towards intersectorianism.

The Second World Buddhist Conference was held in Tokyo in 1952, five months after the effectuation of the peace treaty. The large number of Southern Buddhists to visit Japan on this occasion surprised the Japanese people. The World Peace Conference, the World Religionists' Conference, and other international cultural conferences, which were held in Japan in the following years, were also attended by some Southern Buddhists. Furthermore, not a few Japanese Buddhists visited Southern Buddhist countries at the invitation of the Buddhists in those countries in connection with celebrations of the Buddha Jayanti. It was no longer necessary for Japanese Buddhists and Southern Buddhists to study about each other in books. Some Japanese Buddhists criticized Southern Buddhism as formalistic, while some Southern Buddhists reproached Japanese Buddhism for its deformity. Generally speaking, however, through this exchange of persons mutual understanding and friend-

THE RELIGIOUS WORLD IN JAPAN

ship were greatly promoted. The Buddhists of the world have become next-door neighbors.

The above-mentioned Buddha Jayanti are in commemoration of the 2,500th anniversary of the death of the Buddha, which was celebrated in various countries in Southeast Asia during and after 1955. In 1959 it was celebrated in Japan under the joint sponsorship of the Japanese government and the Japan Buddhist Federation.

To admit that the Buddha died in 544 B.C. was suicidal for Japanese Buddhists. They must preserve the traditional date of the death of the Buddha in order that it be in conformity with their doctrine. The most powerful Buddhist sects in Japan were founded in the Kamakura period, when the Buddha was believed to have died in 949 B.C. This date was very important for the doctrine of these sects, because each of the founders of these sects was firm in the belief that he was the savior of the people living in the Age of Degeneration which, according to the texts of Mahayana Buddhism, started two thousand years after the death of the Buddha. If the Buddha was believed to have died in 544 B.C., no founder of a Kamakura sect would have been able to become the savior of the Age of Degeneration, because at that time that age had not yet come.

In spite of this discrepancy vital to the doctrine of the sects, Japanese Buddhists celebrated the Buddha Jayanti for the purpose of furthering friendship and understanding among the Buddhists of the world and encouraging the formation of World Buddhism into which differences between all types of Buddhism would be dissolved. The gathering was a great success. Japanese Buddhists are now convinced that a day will come when the light of the Buddha will spread all over the world through their cooperation with their fellow-Buddhists in and outside of Japan.

CHRONOLOGY FOR 1960

(July—September)

July 1 —The Association of Shinto Shrines added the following shrines to its list of Special Class(*Beppyō*) shrines: Kanda Myōjin, Miyagi Ken Gokoku Jinja, Hiroshima Jinja.

—A party of twenty-nine Christian leaders associated with the Council for Social Action of the United Church of Christ, USA, arrived for a ten-day visit to study the social situation in Japan.

July 4 —A two-day Catholic Education meeting was opened in Sapporo under the auspices of the Catholic Education Council. Two hundred attended.

—The Franciscan Studium Biblicum has produced a colloquial critical translation of the Book of Wisdom.

—The Buddhist Layman's Association (Zaike Bukkyō Kai) inaugurated a two-month seminar for the study of Buddhist texts in English.

—Mr. Soichi Saitō, who for many years was general secretary of the National YMCA and a prominent Christian leader, died at the age of

74. (He was post-humously awarded the Second Class Order of Merit.)

July 6 —The Japanese Buddhist Association received a telegram from the World Fellowship of Buddhists to the effect that the Sixth Conference of the World Fellowship of Buddhists, which was to be held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia in December, had been postponed on account of the death of King Sramarit of Cambodia. (The conference probably will be held early in 1961 in either Rangoon, Burma or Colombo, Ceylon.)

—The Buddhist Association for Democracy challenged the statement issued by the Japan Buddhist Association on June 23 calling for a harmonious spirit based on Buddhism to resolve the current emergency. (The criticism was based on the alleged failure of the Japan Buddhist Association to defend the "peace constitution," its lack of an understanding of democracy, and its ignoring the responsibility of

CHRONOLOGY FOR 1960

the government to fully evaluate the mass movement. "Golden silence," according to the criticism, was said to be nothing but approval of the notorious crimes committed by the government.)

July 7 —In the presence of 80 priests at the Peace Memorial Cathedral in Hiroshima, Bishop Dominic Noguchi assumed direction of his diocese.

—The Kyoto Buddhist Association conducted its first hearing on the status of the Grand Shrine of Ise. (The Rev. Yoshitada Takahara of Yasaka (Gion) Shrine was among those who spoke on behalf of the proposal. He emphasized the need of a special law to protect the sacred mirror, one of the three Imperial Regalia.)

July 8 —Mr. Zenjirō Kubodera resigned as vice president of the Shishin Kai and seceded from the organization.

—The Nichiren Sect organized four special departments—survey, mission, study and administration—to meet the challenge of Sōka Gakkai.

July 10 —Ryūsenji temple on Mount Omine, which has forbidden women to enter the mountain, can-

celled this 1300-year old ban on all but the last sixty feet of the peak.

—Empukuji Temple at Hachimancho, Kyōto announced that a Zen hall will be opened in the fall for foreign buyers, correspondents, and diplomats.

July 12 —A Chugai Nippō editorial states that, according to a survey made by Myōshinji (Rinzai Zen) and the Soto (Zen) Sect, the number of Buddhist priests having side work and temples having no priests are continuing to increase. The editorial appealed to Buddhist authorities to work out a solution of the problem.

—It was announced that Mr. Dai-saku Ikeda, third president of Sōka Gakkai, is to make a twenty-day trip to North and South America from Oct. 1st. (Sōka Gakkai reports that 460 families in North America and 150 in South America are among its constituents.) The chief priest of Daisekiji, head temple of Sōka Gakkai, and Mr. Ikeda will make a trip to South East Asia and India next January.

—The National Christian Council executive committee decided not to participate in the Sixth (1960)

CHRONOLOGY FOR 1960

World Conference Against A and H Bombs and for Total Disarmament.

—Twenty members of the Christian Liaison Committee met to draw up the 1961 budget and to discuss the question of Christian cemeteries.

July 14 —Mr. Hayato Ikeda, newly elected president of the Liberal Democratic Party, worshipped at Meiji Shrine.

—Seicho-No-Ie held a national convention of students to nullify the revolutionary movement inspired by Marxism. Members distributed pamphlets and leaders made speeches on the street in support of the US-Japan Security Treaty.

July 15 —The International Christian University reported that the largest contributor to the \$425,000 library building (150,000 volume capacity) was John D. Rockefeller 3rd, who gave \$250,000.

—A verdict of not guilty was rendered in the case of the officials of the Yahiko Shrine in Niigata, where a stone balustrade collapsed on January 1, 1956 causing a large number of deaths.

—Representatives of the Committee on Temple Cemeteries of the

Tokyo Buddhist Association visited the Metropolitan Police headquarters and appealed against the alleged illegal actions of Sōka Gakkai.

July 16 —Enno-kyō celebrated the forty-second anniversary of its founder.

July 17 —Some 4,000 adherents of the Myōchi Kai Kyōdan attended a memorial service at the tomb for unknown soldiers at Chidorigafuchi in Tokyo.

—President Ikeda of Sōka Gakkai addressed some 12,000 persons at a mass meeting at Naha in Okinawa. (He appealed to the people to unite for the development of the Japanese nation. Sōka Gakkai claims that 7,000 families in Okinawa are among its adherents.)

July 18 —Dr. Bob Pierce's Tokyo office announces that a Tokyo Christian Crusade will be conducted in May and June 1961.

July 19 —The Japan Buddhist Federation has distributed four petitions in a nation-wide movement to amend the law governing cemeteries.

July 20 —The Student Division of the Japan Buddhist Federation

criticized the attitude of elder Buddhists toward the current emergency, that is, the anti-Kishi, anti-US-Japan Security Treaty. (A new policy was formulated to break-up the feudalistic hierarchy of the temples and reduce social injustice, such as the "caste" system, and to promote a powerful movement for world peace. A National convention of the organization will be held in Kyoto on December 2-4.)

—Eighteen Japanese and seventeen foreign young people participated in a World Council of Churches-sponsored ecumenical work camp to assist in the rehabilitation of typhoon victims at Nagoya.

July 21 —The Kōdō Kyōdan sent a telegram of congratulations to Mrs. Bandaranaike in connection with her election as prime minister of Ceylon. (Kōdō Kyōdan cooperated with the late prime minister, Mr. Pandaranaike, in the erection of a pagoda at the United Nations; it sent relief for the flood victims in Ceylon, and presented machinery to the government for the manufacture of rubber bands in order to assist rehabilitation of the people.

July 22 —The Atsuta Shrine in

Nagoya, where the sacred sword, one of the Imperial Regalia, is enshrined, opened a three-week summer school for elementary school children.

July 24 —The Temman-gū Shrine in Osaka celebrated its 1,000th anniversary.

—A bus carrying forty-four members of the Kobe Bereaved Families Association to the Enryakuji temple on Mount Hiei fell over a cliff and twenty persons were killed.

—The headquarters of Sōka Gakkai began a special English training course for Americans, Indonesians, and Japanese wives of the Americans in the Fuchu area. (Questions raised in the discussion were about the difference between God and Buddha, is life eternal, what is suffering, the scientific basis of the Nichiren Shō Sect and the object of worship. According to Mr. Kamio, the leader, the participants are sincere but find it hard to understand the truth because they have no Buddhistic background or, he added, "they may be dull."

—The Japan Bible Society announces that 25,351,175 copies of portions or the complete Bible have

been distributed in Japan since the end of World War II.

July 25 —The Association of Shinto Shrines sent a notice to the headquarters of each of its prefectural associations urging Shintoists to withdraw from the Japan Teachers Union. (Subsequently two representatives of the Union visited the Association's headquarters with a letter of protest.)

—The Reverend Kojiro Teraguchi, patriarch of Nikkō-kyō, died at the age of eighty.

July 26 —The annual three-day conference of the Fellowship of Christian Missionaries (FCM) opened at Lake Nojiri with 200 present.

—The Catholic Kindergarten Convention opened at the Futaba Girls' School in Tokyo.

July 27 —The Honorable Ichiro Kiyose, Speaker of the House of Representatives, worshipped at the Grand Shrine of Ise.

July 28 —In order to resolve the conflict over temple cemeteries, the Ministry of Welfare has decided to survey the need for the establishment of more public cemeteries.

July 30 —The Youth Division of the Japan Buddhist Federation

opened its Fifth Summer Convention at Yakuōin Temple on Mount Takao. (Subjects discussed were Buddhism and Politics, Buddhism and individual problems, and international friendship through Buddhism.)

The PL Kyōdan conducted concerts throughout Japan during July as a form of evangelism.

Aug 2 —The Liberal Democratic Party special committee on the Religious Juridical Persons Law was dissolved.

—Three hundred representative youths of World Messianity (Sekai Kyūsei-kyō) met at the National Youth Hall at Gotemba.

—The committee on temple cemeteries of the Japan Buddhist Federation held a meeting to discuss revision of the law regulating cemeteries and to consider ways of assisting suites involving temple

Aug 3 —The annual four-day conference of the Evangelical Missionary Association of Japan (EMAJ) met at Karuizawa with 400 present.

Aug 4 —A Kagawa memorial evening was observed at the Bunkyo Public Hall.

CHRONOLOGY FOR 1960

—Some thirty persons including both witnesses and court personnel climbed Mount Fuji in connection with the suite of the Fujinomiya Sengen Shrine against the government for the right to ownership of its 400 meter park (above the eighth station). The case has been in the courts since 1957. A decision is expected some time in 1961.

Aug 6 —The Bishop of Hiroshima celebrated mass on August 6 for the 78,000 persons who died, 15 years ago in the world's first atomic holocaust. (The Catholic community at the time consisted of not more than 150 persons, many of whom lost their lives in the bombing. Today there is a great Cathedral on the site of the former chapel and there are eight other parish districts, six of which have new churches with resident pastors and schools. Two new high schools have been constructed in the last 15 years, the Notre Dame High School for girls and the Jesuit High School for boys. The School of the Holy Souls and the Jesuit House of Studies have been completely rebuilt or expanded. Hiroshima was recently raised to the status of a diocese.)

Aug 7 —Prime Minister Hayato Ikeda paid homage at the Grand Shrine of Ise.

—A memorial monument to General Hideki Tōjō, costing some \$41,000,

was dedicated on a 25 acre site atop a small mountain in a village not far from Nagoya.

Aug 8 —President Ikeda of Sōka Gakkai in an address at the Daise-kiji, head temple of the Nichiren Shō Sect stated that the best way to propagate the faith is to hold political power.

—The Japan Broadcasting Corporation broadcast the first of five programs dealing with Japanese ideas of religion, broken down into the Japanese attitude toward nature, religion, things old and new, heroes, and patriotism. (*Contemporary Religions in Japan* has received permission to publish a translation of some of these programs. The full program or pertinent extracts will appear in subsequent issues.)

Aug 9 —The 14th annual meeting of the Japan Baptist Convention decided to inaugurate an evangelistic campaign to increase the number of churches from seventy to one hundred fifty in five years.

—The Moscow International Congress of Orientology was attended by the Reverend Shōzen Nakayama, Patriarch of Tenri-kyō, and six scholars of the history of religions.

CHRONOLOGY FOR 1960

Aug 10 —Rev. Francis X. Takashi Oizumi, S. J., President of Sophia University, left Tokyo for Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to represent the Tokyo Jesuit University in the Fifth Congress of the International Federation of Catholic Universities.

—The Christian Nursery Association (Protestant) opened a three-week summer workshop at Aoyama Gakuin for thirty teachers of kindergartens and nursery schools.

Aug 12 —Six families, adherents of the Sōka Gakkai, were ostracized by their fellow villagers in Kawagoe City because they refused to contribute to a local shrine festival. They appealed their case to the division of Universal Human Rights at the Urawa local office for redress.

Aug 15 —Services were held throughout the nation commemorating the anniversary of the end of World War II. In Tokyo former servicemen and representatives of bereaved families attended a meeting at the Kudan Hall to which Their Majesties, the Emperor and Empress, sent bouquets. Christians and Buddhists conducted ceremonies at the tomb for unidentified soldiers at Chidorigafuchi.

—A Peace Memorial Service was held under Shinto auspices at Hiroshima Public Hall with 3,000 present.

—The Imperial Household Office announces that H. I. H. The Emperor will make a donation to fifty one shrines for the war dead.

Aug 16 —According to a survey by the Nishi Honganji headquarters, twenty percent of the priests have side work and thirty percent of the temples have an annual income of less than \$300.

—The Wakamiya Hachiman Shrine in Kyoto observed the Buddhist Festival of the Dead (*obon*) in a Shintoistic manner for the first time. (The shrine officials assert that the ancestors can be commemorated in either a Buddhist or Shinto manner.)

Aug 17 —The Fifth Summer Conference of the Buddhist English Study Group opened at Tanchōji temple in Amatsu, Chiba, sponsored by the Buddhist Laymen's Association (Zaike Bukkyō Kai)

Aug 18 —An image of Miroku (Bodhisattva Maetreyā) a national treasure was damaged when a university student in Kyoto attempted

CHRONOLOGY FOR 1960

to kiss the image.

Aug 19 —The Association of Shin-tō Shrines reports that a total of 6,549,000 amulets (*taima*) were disbursed to worshippers during 1959. (That the total was slightly less than the previous year may have been due to the typhoon which seriously damaged the area and interrupted traffic. The number is about half the total for the 13.4 million distributed in the record year of 1944, and approximately the same as in the early 1930s.)

—Seicho-No-Ie observed the completion ceremony of its new shrine, Hozo Jinja, at Uji, Shiga Prefecture.

Aug 20 —One Tokyo minister and two students of International Christian University, who recently returned from participation in an ecumenical work camp in Korea, reported that Koreans (ROK) (1) will not forget for many years what the Japanese did to them during the Japanese occupation of their country; (2) are against the repatriation of Koreans from Japan to North Korea, and (3) are concerned that so many Japanese students are sympathetic with communism, as expressed in the anti-

security treaty activities.

Aug 21 —The Association of Shin-tō Shrines of Shimane Prefecture passed a resolution favoring the re-establishment of February 11th as National Foundation Day.

Aug 22 —A small interdenominational Christian cemetery was formally opened by the Christian Liaison Committee.

Aug 24 —The Association of Chinese Buddhists presented a ten volume edition of the Shuryogon Sutra to the Reverend Yoshimaro, Onishi, chairman of the Kyoto Buddhists Federation and priest of Kiyomizudera.

—Sixteen leaders of the American Baptist Church on a round-the-world tour spend a week in Japan during which religious institutions, especially those sponsored by the American Baptist Convention, were visited.

Aug 25 —Mr. Tokumei Matsumoto, Chairman of the Conference on Tibetan Problems has received a request for aid from the exiled Dala Lama asking for aid in petitioning the General Assembly of the United Nations on behalf of his country.

Aug 25 —The Isuzu Kai, an organ-

ization of alumni of the former Shinto College at Ise (Jingū Kōgakan) met at the Atsuta Shrine in Nagoya and decided to assist in the re-establishment of the institution.

Aug 26 —The Iwashimizu Hachiman Shrine outside Kyoto has begun publication of the shrine's ancient documents in commemoration of the eleven hundredth anniversary of the Shrine. The first volume is on the Archeology of Otokoyama.

—Dr. Hachiro Yuasa, President of International Christian University in reporting on a conference on theological education in Edinburgh stated that a total of \$256,200 had been granted for theological education in Japan.

Aug 27 —A ground-breaking ceremony was observed for a branch building of the Japan Bible Society in Osaka.

—In connection with the annual meeting of the Association of Shinto Shrines of Hiroshima Prefecture, fifty priests seceded from the association and formed a new organization to be called the Jingi Honchō (Association of Shinto, literally, Shinto Deities Association)

Sept 2 —The Buddhist Political

League held a general conference to discussed measures for achieving a clean election.

—The Christian Historical Association opened a two-day session: the first day was at Sacred Heart University and the second at Tokyo Eiwa Junior College.

Sept 4 —The establishment of a national organization for the youth of religious organizations affiliated with the Union of New Religious Organizations in Japan was decided. It is estimated that more than a million youth will participate.

Sept 6 —Two members of Sōka Gakkai were examined by the Kawaguchi procurator for an alleged threatening attitude in connection with their evangelistic efforts.

Sept 11 —Twenty-seven Japanese scholars participated in the Tenth International Congress for the History of Religions at Marburg, Germany

Sept 14 —An official messenger reported the return of the Crown Prince and Princess at the Grand Shrine of Ise.

Sept 16 —The Franciscan Studium Biblicum has published in one volume the Books of Tobit, Judith and Esther. (In translation are the

CHRONOLOGY FOR 1960

Twelve Minor prophets, the Book of Exodus, the two books of Macabees, and the Gospel according to St. Mark,)

Sept 17 —Regarding the secession movement of Shinto priest-teachers from the teacher's union. The Japan Teacher's Union protested to the Japan Association of Shinto Priest-Teachers (Zenkoku Shinshoku Kennin Kyōin Kyōgi Kai 全国神職兼任協議会). The Japan Conference of the Representatives of Ujiko (Zenkoku Ujiko Sōdai Kai 全国氏子総代会) support the action of the priests.

Sept 26 —The Nagoya Christian Community Center(Protestant)was dedicated on the first anniversary of the Ise Bay typhoon.

Sept 28 —Five hundred Protestant ministers representing various Protestant denominations attended a preparatory meeting for the 1960 Tokyo (World Vision) Crusade.

Sept 30 —Twenty-five representatives of the Disciples of Christ Church in the USA visited Japan enroute to a world meeting of the Disciples of Christ Church in Edinburgh.

INSTITUTE NEWS

By the way how about some questions ?

"I am deeply grateful to you for the effort and time which you expended in my behalf last summer. Without your assistance I am afraid that our stay in Japan would have been just another tourist visit. I wish I could have had the time to make more adequate preparation for the visit, so I could have asked better questions and known more what to look for, but in spite of that inadequacy I feel that my own understanding has been increased and enriched. Your guidance and help made the difference." (Hong Kong)

"I have been wanting to write to you for some time. We have been subscribing to your publications, and now most recently your periodical, which I am finding of such value that I am going to have a notice published in the News Notes of the American Theological Library Association, so that others may subscribe. It fills a great need in this country, because there is so little published in English on the modern religious situation in Japan." (Berkley, Calif)

"Many thanks for your kindness to send us *The Kami Way* by Dr. Ono and *Contemporary Religions in Japan*. We congratulate you on your grand work of offering the works on various religions in Japan to the English-speaking world. I hope they will be circulated throughout the world, orient and occident." (Tokyo)